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THE  
LAST SHILLING;  
OR,  
THE SELFISH CHILD.

—  
A Story founded on fact.  
—

BY  
THE REV. PHILIP BENNETT POWER, M.A.



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## THE LAST SHILLING,

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### CHAPTER I.

IN a back room of one of the houses inhabited by the London poor, there lived a widow and her only child. The mother might have been forty-five or thereabouts, but poverty and sorrow made her look as though she were at least ten years older. She had seen better days, and her present home was very unlike that which she had been used to in former times. But her little back room, though very small, was much neater than the ordinary dwellings of the poor. There was no dirt on the floor, on the windows, or on the wall ; her things were always in their place, and it could have been ascertained at a glance, that a respect-

able and cleanly woman managed every thing around. It is true that there was not very much to arrange, but what there was, was done so well, that every one must have seen, that had Mrs. Wright been the mistress of a large house, each thing in it would have been kept in order the most complete. Mrs. Wright knew that every thing should be well done, that nothing should be neglected because it was little, and she had learned in her Bible that the servant that had been faithful in a little was entrusted afterwards with a great deal more.

It was indeed cheering to go into this neat room ; the little bed lay with the head toward the window, and a small white curtain hung over the top of it ; a clock ticked on the wall above ; at the end of the room was a chest of drawers ; there was also a small table and two chairs, and on the table a large Bible, which the widow had bought after saving her pence for many weeks. You will think perhaps that as she was so poor a

smaller one might have done, but Mrs. Wright's eyes were now so much weaker than they used to be, that she could not read small print by candle light, and she often sat up in bed the greatest part of a sleepless night, looking out such passages as she knew would deepen her trust in God, and lighten her many cares.

But Mrs. Wright's great care and anxiety in life was not her poverty, but her daughter Annie, who was now twelve years old. She loved Annie (who was her only child) with all the tenderness and devotion of a mother's love, and Annie was a pretty child, and clever, and was often a great help. How many things Mrs. Wright suffered on her daughter's account, would take too much time to tell. She often did not know where to get her daily bread ; meat they seldom tasted, except when the clergyman of the neighbouring church sent her some, and often the widow cried bitterly as she knew her little girl was coming home from school, and that

there was nothing but a morsel of dry bread for her dinner. At one time Annie wanted new shoes, and the doctor said that if she caught cold it might prove very dangerous, as she was a delicate child ; at another, she had outgrown her frock, and where to get these things when they were wanted the widow did not know. But though Annie's mother was often in this distress, Annie herself was not always unhappy. It is true, she used to cry when she saw the tears on her mother's cheek, and then she kissed them off, but her own sorrows were very few. Poor as she was, she enjoyed many pleasures, not the least of which was, that she had her mother to talk to, and that was as good as riches, or fine clothes, or anything else to her, and in the next room lived Mrs. Parker, who was very kind ; her school-fellows also were fond of her, and the clergyman's wife took great notice of her. All these things were very pleasant, and as far as real happiness went, Annie was as well off as many who

were much richer, and wore finer clothes, and had plenty of dainties at their table every day. Her mother often told her, that fine things did not make people happy, and then she used to read to her that verse in her large Bible, which says "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

As Mrs. Parker was so kind to Annie and her mother, it may be well to tell you who she was. This good woman was also very poor. She lived in the front room, and there was only the landing between Mrs. Wright's apartment and her own. Indeed, in old times, when the street was inhabited by rich people, the two rooms were one, with a folding door in the middle, and now that they were separated, the place where the door stood, was bricked up and papered over, so that had it not been for the wood work at the top, one would have thought that they had always been two separate rooms. Mrs. Parker, like Annie's mother, was a pious woman.

She had many troubles, as indeed all the poor have, but she tried to walk with God, and so she managed never to let them cast her down, or prevent her being about her daily work. Her husband was not dead, but he was not quite in his right senses. He earned very little money at his trade of tailoring, not more than a shilling in the week, and to get their daily bread his wife used to keep a little school. Mrs. Parker had a great deal to bear from her husband's curious fancies; at one time the old man thought that she used to give him stones instead of bread; at another, that he had mud instead of tea to drink; besides which, he was very mischievous, and would cut his wife's dress with his great scissors whenever he could steal behind her, and at times he used to hobble after her with a stick and threaten to beat her; but in spite of all this, Mrs. Parker attended carefully to his wants, and never told her neighbours any of his rude or crazy doings; for although he was very odd, she

remembered that he was still her husband, and she knew that she ought to respect him and hide his faults as much as she could. This was very delightful to see, and many a child who every moment runs to tell tales about his brother or his sister, might have learned from patient Mrs. Parker's every day life, to be long-suffering and kind and gentle in love.

I must not forget to tell you, that Annie used sometimes to help Mrs. Parker with her school. Whenever she had a holiday or a spare moment at home she assisted to teach the younger children. She made herself very useful, and the old tailor was so fond of her, that he never tried to do her any harm, but used to obey her just like a little child. He once had a little girl who died at Annie's age, and he used to fancy that Annie was this little daughter come back to him, after having been a very long time away.

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## CHAPTER II.

THE Spring had passed away, and the Summer also had nearly gone, when the circumstances happened which it is the principal design of this story to relate. Annie's mother had several times been very ill, and as the few pupils to whom she taught drawing (for she had herself learned when she was in far better circumstances) were now out of town, she had often been reduced to very great distress. Had it not been for a little money that Annie earned by attending to a little girl in a neighbouring street, the widow and her daughter could not have had the common necessaries of life. Annie taught this little child, and received half-a-crown a week for her reward. Who can tell the joy with which she brought home the first ten shillings that she earned? Mrs. Seabright, whose little girl she taught, paid her at the end of the first four weeks, and she happened in doing so to give her a new half-sovereign.

Annie's delight knew no bounds, she skipped homewards full of glee ; at one moment she tied the coin in the corner of her pocket handkerchief that she should not lose it, and the next moment she took it out again to rub it, and to make it look brighter ; she would have made it twice as handsome and as valuable if she could, for it was for her own dear mother. But how many temptations did she meet on the short way home. A splendid toy shop seemed as though it would induce her to buy a new doll, with flaxen curls, arms and feet of wax, and moving eyes ; then came a confectioner's, where there were large sheets of sweet stuff covered over with almonds, and immense sticks of different colored sugars in the window. This was a great temptation to the little girl ; she had often had a pennyworth, which was only a small part of one of the sheets or sticks, but now if she pleased she might have several, and she thought—what would Martha Wyse say if she saw me with a whole sugar-stick ? Yes ! it

was a very hard temptation, for the stick in question was twisted with red and blue colours, was as thick as a hoop stick, and a full yard long, but Annie ran away as fast as she could, she knew that if she staid longer she must be tempted, and a voice within kept saying to her " Honour thy father and thy mother." She had learned her Bible, and if we remember the verses we learn, and listen to what they say, how often when there is no one near to guide us, will they direct us in the way that is right.

At last Annie reached the door of her mother's house ; she did not knock immediately, but stood upon the step for awhile ; then she untied her handkerchief and took out her golden coin. Who can tell how happy she felt, how thankful she was that she had not been tempted by either the toys or sugar-sticks, her heart seemed to beat twice as fast as it had ever done before. " Come out, my beautiful little golden pet," said the little girl, " and I will give you a

last rub with this handkerchief that you may look as bright as possible for my dear mother. I wish I could work twice as hard if I could get some more, but then," said she, stopping and thinking, "it is a great thing to have even this one." So, there she stood polishing it for a moment or two, and at last she rapped at the door. A little child that lived down stairs in the kitchen came up and opened it, and Annie rushed in without a moment's delay. Three steps at a time she jumped up the old staircase, which almost shook under her, until she reached her mother's door, which she entered, and in another instant was in her arms. "There, mother," said Annie, as quickly as she could speak, for her breath was almost gone from rushing up the stairs, "There, there it is—a real half-sovereign, bright, red, oh the beautiful thing! and it is for you, mother—all for you; and when Annie grows big, perhaps instead of a half-sovereign she may bring a whole one, yes, or two or three," and then she flung her-

self into her mother's arms, and kissed her over and over again.

Mrs. Wright was indeed delighted to receive so much. She had her rent to pay; that morning they had only tasted dry bread for breakfast, and she longed for a little tea and sugar; then Annie's boots wanted to be mended, and the old clock did not go quite right, and if possible she would like to get it looked to; and thus the widow spent the money ten times over in her mind.

But there were others also to share in Annie's joy. She must go and shew Mr. and Mrs. Parker her treasure, and so up she started to go with it into the next room. And indeed it was high time, for Mr. Parker had heard all the noise that Annie made, and was at that very moment knocking with his great shears at the door, to know what was going on.

"Come in! Come in!" said Annie. "Come in Mr. Parker and see what I brought home to-day."

“What is it?” said Mr. Parker, half opening the door, and putting in his grey head, “it is a kitten I suppose, or perhaps a puppy dog. Ha! Ha! Ha!” cried the old man, and he burst into a long loud laugh, then he began to whistle, and beat the wall with his shears until he tired himself.

Annie knew that he was not right in his mind, so she was not rude to him, but waited until he stopped, to shew him what it really was. “So you think, Mr. Parker,” said she, “that it is a cat or a dog, you are quite wrong, it is—”

“Oh yes,” said Mr. Parker, “I know what it is, it is a piece of red ribbon tied into a bow knot; if it belonged to any one else I would cut it into a thousand pieces with my shears, but as it is yours, my little pet, I’ll sew it on to your dress for you, and then they’ll say: Dear me!” said the old man, calling her by his daughter’s name, “how fine Miss Parker is!” and then he burst out again into a loud and long fit of laughter.

“ You shall see, you shall see,” said Annie. “ Look here,” and she went up to the old man with the half-sovereign in her hand ; “ I earned that, and now I have given it to my mother, and she is going to do such a number of things with it ; it is a great deal of money,” said Annie, “ and you shall see what a great deal it will do.”

The old man looked long and earnestly at the little piece of gold, he seemed as though he were trying to remember something that had happened a very long while ago ; he used to receive a great deal of gold for his work in former days, and he had not seen any now for a long long time. But whatever he was thinking of, he very soon gave it up.

“ Shall we shew it to the children in the next room ? ” said Annie, “ they have not yet gone home from school.”

“ Yes,” said Mr. Parker, “ let us go in and they shall all come to the window and look at it, and the best child shall take it in her hand ; ” and so, leaving Mrs. Wright to her

plans about spending it, in they went, the old grey haired man and the little girl, both as happy as ever they could be.

Delighted indeed were all Mrs. Parker's little scholars at the sight of such a pretty thing—they were all allowed to look. Annie begged for little Kitty Tupper that was in the corner, and on promising to be a better girl for the future, even she was allowed to come and see, while Lucy Morrison, the best child in Mrs. Parker's school, held it in her hand for two minutes at the least. But it was now time for the children to go home, so Mrs. Parker arranged them all on their forms, and then spoke to them as follows: " You all see that bright half-sovereign which Annie has brought home, it is very bright and very pretty, but it is something better than pretty, it is very useful too, it will buy a great many things, and Annie has earned it to give to her mother. I hope children when you are grown up and earn money, you will not forget to give a share to your mothers, who

provide you your clothes and food, send you to school, and do everything for you now."

Mrs. Parker's school now broke up, all her little children went home, and Annie returned to her mother's room.

I am sure I need scarcely say what a pleasant evening they passed. Annie's mother took her out with her to buy some tea and sugar, and never did any meal appear to the little girl so nice as that which was now procured by her own earnings. This is one blessing which God gives the poor. The bread of the labouring man is sweet, and what has been worked for is much more valued than what is had without any labour.

Let us learn from this, and be encouraged in all our difficulties, remembering that success at the last will more than compensate for our trials, if our work be approved of God.

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## CHAPTER III.

ANNIE had earned several half-sovereigns when the circumstances occurred of which we are now to speak. The Summer was fast drawing to a close, when the clergyman to whose Sunday school she belonged, was going for three weeks to the sea-side for the benefit of his health. The place to which he was going was a beautiful little village on the coast of Kent, where a friend had lent him a house for a little time. This gentleman's name was Mr. Shepherd, and Mrs. Shepherd in making the arrangements for their absence determined on taking one of her servants with her, and allowing the other to go home for awhile and see her father, whom she had not seen for quite three years. But Mrs. Shepherd, who was always trying to do some good, was going to take some one else besides her own servant. She was a very unselfish person, always giving up her own

pleasure for other people's, and trying to make every occasion an opportunity of doing some good. Every one knew that this was Mrs. Shepherd's character, and every one loved her a thousand times more than if she had been always trying what she could do for herself. And here, as usual, she found an opportunity of doing good. "Don't you think, my dear," said she to her husband one day at dinner, "that we could take little Emily Bunny with us to the sea-side, she has been a very good girl all the half-year at school, and we have found her so attentive and obedient that it would be a nice reward and treat for her? I am very anxious that we should do it if possible, for she has looked very ill indeed of late, and her mother told me that Dr. Noble said the sea-air would do her more good than all the medicine in the world. Besides which," said Mrs. Shepherd, for she always thought of *every* one's comfort, "if we take Emily with our own

maid, the one can go out in the evening and have a walk, while the other remains at home to mind the house."

Mr. Shepherd thought for a while, and then agreed that Emily should accompany them; and truly he could have chosen no child that would have given him less trouble in any way; this Mr. Shepherd knew, for he had heard a great deal of her before. And this is only one instance out of a great many which shew, how in the end good conduct is sure to meet with its reward; we do not know *how* or *when*, but it is a comfort to think, that it will surely come at last.

Little did Emily Bunny think, as she was obedient and attentive to Mrs. Shepherd's wishes throughout the year, that she should have such a great reward as this. It soon spread through the school that Emily was going to the sea-side, and that, too, with no less a person than Mrs. Shepherd herself. Some children wondered why she was chosen. She was not the handsomest nor the cleverest;

Mary Coke's sewing was better than hers, and Fanny Ridout spelled twice as well, but Mrs. Richardson, the school-mistress, soon unravelled the mystery, for she told them that Mrs. Shepherd had chosen her because she was the *best* child, and because she was not only attentive in school, but also a most excellent child out of school.

It was settled that Emily was to go, when a most unexpected event occurred which was to afford a similar treat to some other child. Mrs. Shepherd's servant who was going home, received a letter from her father, saying, that as Mrs. Shepherd had been so kind to her, he wished to shew his gratitude in the only way he could, which was by inviting some one of the school-children down to his house with his daughter, to stay there as long as she remained. Mr. Smith allowed his daughter to choose which of the children she pleased, and she chose Annie Wright. She did not choose her because she was the best child in the school, but because she liked

her best, and as Mrs. Shepherd made no objection, it was determined that she should go. But alas ! there was one great impediment, it would cost at least twenty shillings to go by the train, and where was Annie to get such a sum as this. This threw a great damp over her joy ; Mr. Shepherd was going to pay for Emily, but he could not afford to pay for Annie, and if she could not get the money she must remain in London and miss this unexpected treat. As to earning the money, that was out of the question, for there was no time, and there were no savings to draw it from. Annie's little pupil had been out of town for the last month, and so she had not received her half-sovereign as she had done for some months past. Annie went to bed that night with a heavy heart ; whatever way she looked she saw no chance of the twenty shillings, and she dropped asleep upon her pillow almost in despair. How often we dream of what is uppermost in our minds ! and thus it was with Annie Wright,

she tossed about, her face was flushed, and she began to talk in her sleep about the railroad and the country, and a thousand things connected with the journey ; at one moment she was laughing with joy, thinking she was in the train, and at another she was crying, thinking she had been left behind.

Poor Annie did not know what she was doing, but all this made her mother very sad. Mrs. Wright was not able to sleep ; she could not bear to think of her little girl's missing so much pleasure, and so she lay awake wondering what she could do. At last she hit on one plan which would indeed force her to labour very hard, but that she was content to bear, provided she could gratify her dear and only child. She determined to go to a warehouse and ask for some shirts to make, and then by what she earned to pay for Annie's trip. Meanwhile she thought she would ask Mrs. Shepherd to lend her the amount, and she would undertake to pay her back every week, with the money she earned

for the shirts. In the morning when Annie awoke, what was her surprise to find her mother, who generally looked so sad, quite cheerful and full of smiles. "You are to go to the country, Annie dear," said she, "and I hope you will be very happy; I have been thinking how I can get the money and I have found out a way, so come let us cheer up and talk of the pleasure you are to have." Annie was not long in leaping out of bed, she could have almost screamed with joy. She threw her arms round her mother's neck, and kissed her, and thanked her over and over again, but she never thought of asking where the money was to be found. She knew her mother had not a farthing, and how could she in a moment find so much. All the day passed over and she never asked, she was so much engaged in the prospect of her pleasure that she thought of nothing else. Alas! it was an exhibition of that selfishness which afterwards brought her into so much trouble.

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## CHAPTER IV.

TRUE to her determination, Mrs. Wright hastened to Mrs. Shepherd the clergyman's wife, as soon as her scanty breakfast had been despatched. The breakfast had been very poor indeed; it consisted of some dry bread, and tea without either milk or sugar. There are many who would have scorned such a humble meal, but the widow was thankful for it, for there were times when she had even less than this.

The morning meal then being over, she arrived at Mrs. Shepherd's house after a few minutes walk, and found that lady engaged with several poor persons who had come, some for dispensary letters, some to deposit their money for the clothing club, and some for relief.

It would have done any ones heart good to have seen this kind lady sitting at her table, transacting with the greatest regularity her morning's business. Each person was

attended to in the order of her arrival ; there was no difficulty in finding any name in the clothing club book, for each one was ranged under its own proper letter, nor in laying hands upon a dispensary letter, or ticket for meat, or bread, or coal, for each packet of tickets occupied its own well-known position in the drawer appropriated to them, so that Mrs. Shepherd could have taken out any particular one, even if her eyes had been blind-folded. Owing to this regularity, Mrs. Shepherd got through a great deal of work in a very little time ; she saved perhaps two or three minutes in settling each person's business, and these minutes soon mounted up, and came to many hours in the course of the year.

Mrs. Wright then took her seat near the door and waited patiently until all the others had been attended to. At times her heart failed her, and she thought she could never venture to ask for so large a sum as a sovereign, but these thoughts passed quickly

away when she heard with what uniform kindness and gentleness Mrs. Shepherd spoke to every one.

There was one case, however, which Mrs. Shepherd had to attend to, which made the widow's heart sink within her. Amongst those assembled in the room was an elderly woman who came for a letter for the dispensary.

"What can I do for you, Mrs. Hall?" said the clergyman's wife, "I hope you have been able to put by sixpence for the clothing club, and have brought it to me?"

"I wish I could lay by anything, Ma'am," replied Mrs. Hall, "but I can scarce live, much less save, the times are so bad, and they are getting harder and harder every day. I have come for a dispensary letter, I feel very ill, the late sitting up at night, and the early rising in the morning, with only half food, is beginning to tell on me, and I am anxious to see the Doctor—not for my own sake," she added, dropping her voice

into a whisper, "so much as for my poor children's, who must want if I cannot work. The shirts," she continued, "take just as long to do as ever they did, and we get less for them, and therefore cannot afford to live even as well as we used, although even then," said she with a sigh, "we had not over much."

It was impossible for Mrs. Wright to hear this, without feeling somewhat alarmed at the experiment she was about to make; still, she never wavered, but determined to bear anything, or do any amount of work, if only she could procure for her child the gratification on which her heart was so much set.

Mrs. Shepherd promised Mrs. Hall to call upon her in the course of the day, and see whether anything could be done for her besides giving her the dispensary letter; after which she attended to the rest, until at last there only remained Mrs. Wright, whose heart now began to fail again, when the time had really come for asking for the loan of so large a sum.

“Well! Mrs. Wright,” said Mrs. Shepherd, “how has Annie been getting on at home? I am sorry to say we have not found her at the school exactly as we should like, and I have been thinking of calling on you, and talking about her. I fear I discover some traces of selfishness in her disposition which we must endeavour to correct, for selfishness is full of evil, and curses the life of every one on whose heart it fastens.”

“I hope,” said the widow, “that Annie has not done anything very wrong.”

“Nothing very wrong,” replied Mrs. Shepherd, “but several little things have occurred which make me fear that this evil has commenced to work in her heart.”

“I am glad,” said the widow, who had felt greatly distressed, “that Annie has not committed any great fault.”

“So am I,” continued Mrs. Shepherd, “but we must not congratulate ourselves too much on that account. There is an old saying, that ‘a feather shews how the wind

blows,' and these little things in which Annie's disposition has manifested itself must be carefully watched, lest the spark within should break out into a flame."

"I should be indeed grieved most bitterly," said the widow, "if my child were to live only for herself, and I shall observe her conduct at home more closely than I have hitherto done, and yet," said she, after musing for a while, "I cannot remember having traced anything of the kind in Annie."

"Because," said Mrs. Shepherd, "you do not look for it in little things ; besides, you give up everything to her wishes, and she has comparatively few opportunities of shewing her disposition, but it comes out much more plainly at school, where her will is very often crossed by her school-fellows, and on these occasions Mrs. Richardson, her mistress, tells me, that she often acts with anything but a Christian spirit."

There was truth in Mrs. Shepherd's remark. Annie was so petted by her mother

that her true disposition did not shew itself at home, and Mrs. Wright could hardly bring herself to believe what she heard, even though her child had only the very night before given as plain a proof as possible, that what Mrs. Shepherd said was only too true.

“But what can I do for you?” said the clergyman’s wife, “for if I can in any way serve your daughter or yourself, I shall be most happy.”

Mrs. Wright felt her heart beat twice as fast as usual, and thought that she should have choked, she felt something so fast in her throat; and for a moment she almost wished that she had not come to ask for so much.

“If I can do anything for you,” said Mrs. Shepherd again, “I shall be *most* happy,” and she laid such emphasis upon the word *most*, that Mrs. Wright’s heart ceased to beat so quickly, and the choking in her throat passed away altogether.

“If it is not too great a liberty,” said the widow, “I have come to ask for the loan of

some money, which I hope to repay by degrees. I scarcely liked to ask for it, it seems so large a sum, but I can assure you, Ma'am, it shall be honestly, and I hope punctually returned."

"How much is it, and what is it for?" said Mrs. Shepherd, "and if the sum is not too large, and I approve of the object for which you require it, I shall have no objection to lend it, on the other hand I shall be glad if I can be the means of assisting you."

"I hope, Ma'am, that you will not think a sovereign *too* large a sum, although it is a great deal; I do not want it immediately for myself, but for Annie, and I trust you will approve of the way in which it is to be spent."

"Does your daughter want clothes?" said Mrs. Shepherd, "for if that be the case, I think I can assist you without your going in debt so large a sum as a sovereign."

"She is not in urgent want of clothes, Ma'am," replied Mrs. Wright, "but I thought this trip to the country would do her *so* much

good, and she has cried and fretted so much over the disappointment of not being able to go, that I have made bold to ask you to lend me money enough to pay her fare, which by the third class train will come exactly to a sovereign, there and back."

When Mrs. Shepherd heard this, she was very much distressed. She knew how pinched the widow was in her circumstances, how hard a struggle she had to live, what bitter privations she had to undergo. She saw at once that a mistaken fondness for her daughter was inducing Mrs. Wright to gratify her at almost any cost, and she felt that the child was quite old enough to know the position in which they stood, and that this was in truth an occasion on which she was shewing that selfishness which had been coming out so prominently of late.

Mrs. Shepherd thought that it was proper the widow should know what she felt on the subject, she therefore spoke to her very seriously about her child.

"I am indeed sorry," said she, "that you have come to me with this request; not for the sake of the sovereign, for that is comparatively of no consequence, but because this only convinces me the more, that my fears of Annie's selfish character are only too well founded. Does she not know well your circumstances, and that it is impossible that you can afford so much money, when you are at times in want of almost the very necessaries of life?"

"Annie knows that we are very poor," said the widow with a sigh, "even if she wished she could not hide it from herself, for there are times when we are pinched very much."

"Then how could she think of letting you come to me to borrow so large a sum as a sovereign, to be spent entirely upon herself?"

"She does not know, Ma'am, that I have come to borrow it from you," replied the widow; "I told her she should go to the country, and that I would get the money,

and she seems too overjoyed to think about where it is to come from."

Mrs. Shepherd shook her head. "Annie," said she, "will have to undergo much wretchedness in life, if she is unthinking and selfish, and if she has so little thought for her own mother, she is not likely to have much for others. I do not think I can lend you the sovereign for this purpose."

At this, Mrs. Wright's heart sunk within her ; there passed before her imagination the disappointed features of her child, she fancied that she heard her sobs, she remembered how at one time her little girl had brought her home all her earnings, and she could not bear the thought of her missing the expected treat. Accordingly she pleaded hard with Mrs. Shepherd for the loan of the money, and urged as a reason the pale face and delicacy of her little girl, who was certainly growing very fast, and to whom a little country air would be of the greatest use.

So effectually did she urge all this on the

clergyman's wife, that she at length consented to advance the money, but not until she had told the widow, that during the ensuing half-year she intended to take her daughter especially into her own hands, and until the widow had promised that Mrs. Shepherd might use what means she thought fit to overcome Annie's selfishness.

We need scarcely say with what pleasure Mrs. Wright returned home with the sovereign in her possession; and although now and then an uncomfortable feeling would pass across her mind, as she thought of poor Mrs. Hall, and how she had lost her health at shirt making, and was after all so ill-paid, still she dismissed all this and preferred dwelling upon Annie's country trip, and the enjoyment which was in store for the child she loved so well.

But to return to the widow's home: her daughter was in a state of the greatest restlessness all the time she was away. She arranged twenty times over, the few things that

were in the room, she looked out the best of the few clothes she had, she looked continually at the clock, and ran in and out of Mrs. Parker's room so often that she was told she must not come in any more until the afternoon ; and thus she wasted her time, thinking of nothing but her mother's return and the sovereign that was to pay her expenses and enable her to enjoy her country treat. How entirely Annie was engrossed in self ! had it not been so, she might have been most usefully employed ; she saw a pair of broken stockings belonging to her mother, and another pair belonging to herself ; these she might have mended, for she could work very well, but alas ! she was too unsettled for any useful occupation ; had she not been so engrossed on "self," she might have done a useful task for her kind and indulgent parent, and given her a practical proof of how much she valued her kindness, and how willing she was to assist her in everything that lay in her power.

It is by deeds, far more than by words, that we are to fulfil the command which tells us to "honour our father and mother," but selfishness, when indulged, will come continually in the way of our performing what our consciences tell us we ought to do, and under its influence a blight comes over the best feelings of the heart, which wither and die, and produce no holy fruit.

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## CHAPTER V.

AFTER having waited what seemed to her a very great while, Annie had the pleasure of hearing her mother's footstep upon the stair. The widow did not bound up the steps, even though she was the bearer of a sovereign, as her little daughter had done some time ago when she brought home her first earnings to her mother; time and privation had changed her from what she used to be, and she walked

but slowly, even when she tried to go as fast as she could.

Annie ran out upon the stairs to meet her mother, who looked pale and anxious, and very tired; for what Mrs. Shepherd had said about Annie's selfishness kept forcing itself upon her mind, and although she struggled hard against it, she began to think that if what Mrs. Hall had said was true, it would cost her more than she had calculated on to make up the money Mrs. Shepherd had so kindly lent.

But the mother's anxious look and tired step were unnoticed by her daughter, whose mind was now entirely engrossed with a single thought, and that, one which concerned only her own pleasure.

Formerly she would have thrown her arms round her mother's neck, as she met her on the landing, and have taken her arm as though she would have helped her along, and then have taken off her bonnet and hung it on the peg behind the door, all which little

attentions are such nice marks not only of a child's love, but also of her respect for a parent ; but all these seemed to have belonged to some good times now gone by, for on the present occasion not one of them was shewn.

The first words which the child uttered were, "Have you got the money ?" "Am I to go to the country ?" and before her mother had time to answer her, Annie thrust her hand into the pocket of her gown, and on feeling the sovereign screamed aloud with joy. So loud was her cry, that it brought Mrs. Parker out of her room to know what had happened, for she thought that Annie must have fallen down the stairs, or met with some grievous accident. By this time however the child was able to speak, and Mrs. Parker heard from herself that no accident had occurred, but that the expected sovereign had arrived, which was to be the source of so much pleasure, and to pay for the country trip.

The attention that Annie forgot to bestow

upon her mother, was not omitted by Mrs. Parker, who remarked that she was paler than usual, and made her sit down as quickly as possible.

“ You seem exhausted,” said she, “ and I will bring you a little of the wine that is left since I was so ill. Mrs. Shepherd one day brought me a bottle, and there is some remaining ; it will do you a great deal of good. Here Annie, bring a wineglass for your mother.”

But the child paid no attention to what was said, she seemed entirely engrossed with the sovereign, which was to procure such expected pleasure, and after having called again and not having received any answer, Mrs. Parker went for the glass herself.

Fondly as Mrs. Wright loved her child, and blind as she had been to her faults, and especially to that of selfishness, she could not help the thought flashing across her mind, that there was much truth in the remarks which Mrs. Shepherd had made so short a time before.

After Mrs. Parker had brought in the glass of wine, she left the widow alone with her daughter, as she had to look after her school. Then for the first time Annie began to shew some signs of thankfulness to her mother for having procured the sovereign. She kissed her, and threw her arms around her neck, but alas ! forgot those little attentions which would have shewn more than anything else that her love was unselfish. Where, we may ask, would have been all those kisses if her mother had not procured the sovereign ? there is too much reason to suppose, that had she returned without having been able to get the money, she would have met with crying and complaints, and not even the little love that she received now.

It was a considerable time before Annie ever thought of enquiring where her mother had got the money. At last she asked, and was very much surprised when she heard that it had come from Mrs. Shepherd. Now, Annie need not have been the least surprised

at this ; the clergyman's wife had helped them very often, she had been their best friend, and had lent them money on several occasions when they could never have found it elsewhere ; and yet the little girl seemed to have forgotten all this, for she cried :

“ From Mrs. Shepherd ! Well, who'd have thought it ! Something must have made her in a very good humour this morning, or *she* would never lend a sovereign to any one.”

“ You are wrong,” my dear child, “ in speaking thus of one who has been so kind a friend to us ; I am sure,” continued the widow, “ if it had not been for her, we must have often starved.”

“ Oh yes,” said Annie, “ she used to be very kind, and I used to like her very much at one time, but I don't think she likes me now, and *so* I don't like her,” and the child laid an emphasis on the word ‘ *so*,’ which plainly shewed that she was bent on returning evil for that which she thought she had received.

“ But how do you know, my child,” said the widow, “ that Mrs. Shepherd does not like you ? ”

“ She has spoken to me so often,” said Annie, “ and has put my schoolfellows above me, and prevented my doing so many things that I intended, that I *do* not like her, and I *will* not like her, and I am sure if she knew that you wanted the sovereign for me she would never have let you have it.”

“ Indeed, Annie dear, Mrs Shepherd is not so bad as you say, for she knew that the sovereign was for you, and it was because I said that I thought your health required a change, that she lent it.”

“ But if she cared for me, why did she not choose me instead of Emily Bunny to go with her to the sea-side ? ”

“ Mrs. Shepherd may choose whom she pleases,” said the widow ; “ I am sure she had her own good reasons for choosing Emily, and we ought to rejoice when our friends get anything good.”

“ But Emily is not *I*,” interrupted Annie, “ and it is nothing to me that she is to enjoy the waves and the strand, while Mrs. Shepherd would have left me here and never cared whether I had a happy holiday or not.”

“ There are many children, my dear,” replied the widow, “ who must remain in London all the Autumn, and after all, the holidays do not last so very long.”

To all this argument, however, the selfish child was quite deaf, and because she had not been chosen in preference to her school-fellow, Emily Bunny, she neither could nor would believe that the clergyman’s wife had not some particular hatred to her. Thus her selfishness was productive of many evils, it made her envious and unjust, and an evil speaker, besides disrespectful and unloving to her mother, and rude, as we have seen in her conduct to Mrs. Parker. Alas! who can commit one sin, and determine that he will stop there? One sin brings many, and Annie Wright’s selfishness not only brought

her into all these sins, of which we have just now spoken, but also into much trouble, as we shall presently see.

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE time had now come for Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd to leave town, and for their servant Harriet to go home and see her father.

A week had passed since Mrs. Wright had borrowed the sovereign from Mrs. Shepherd, and it had been a week of great preparation with all parties, for there was very much to be done.

Harriet Smith had to get every thing into the best order, and to see that the kitchen and all belonging to it was ready to be given up to the servants of the clergyman who was to undertake Mr. Shepherd's duty during his absence, and also to live in his house ; and as Harriet was rather proud of her kitchen looking bright and well, she took extra

pains, so that at last every thing looked as though it could not possibly bear another rub, as though it was as bright as ever it could be. Indeed there was not a dish cover in which you could not see your face, as well as in a looking glass ; and Harriet smiled as she walked along their shining row and saw herself in each of them. But there was something else to be done, and Harriet's kind heart was full of happiness as she set about doing it. Some presents were to be bought for her little sisters, and for her father and mother, and as she had been taught by Mrs. Shepherd to lay by a portion of her wages, she felt that she could now afford to take some token of remembrance to every one at home. It cost Harriet some hours thought, as to what these presents should be. At one time she decided on a cap for her mother, then she changed her mind, and settled that a handkerchief would be better. And thus she often changed her mind about her father's present also ; now it was to be a

blotting case for writing his letters, and now a gold pen, such as she had seen with Mr. Shepherd, and heard him praise very much; then she fancied a snuff box—for Mr. Smith unfortunately was very fond of taking snuff, and at last she rejected all these, and determined not to fix on any thing until she went out, and saw what was most likely to suit.

Mrs. Shepherd had promised Harriet a holiday, which was to be devoted to the purchase of these presents, but as all the servants at Mrs. Shepherd's house were fully occupied, Harriet had to work rather hard, to enable her mistress to spare her for so long a time. This made the week one of great business to her, but she worked with a willing mind, and therefore her labour was sweet.

Harriet's fellow servant was also very much engaged. She was a much quieter girl than Harriet, but she thought a great deal, and had a deep sense of the responsibility that she was under to do every thing

well, not with eye service as a man pleaser, but as one that must give account unto God. This housemaid's name was Eliza, and she was highly valued by her master and mistress, for the conscientious way in which all her duties were performed. Some people who knew her called her old fashioned, but she was neither old, nor old fashioned, unless indeed it be old fashioned to do every thing in the best way, and to be conscientious in the performance of every duty. She was so precise on the smallest points, always insisting that the least thing ought to be done as carefully as the greatest, that Harriet, who was not so very precise, sometimes felt displeased with her, and used to laugh at her in her own merry way, and one occasion we grieve to say, that she actually went into a bad temper with her because she told her that she was not particular enough in *every* thing.

This conduct of Eliza's was not unnoticed by her master and mistress; they valued

their housemaid most highly for it, they knew that a great deal of the business of life consists in attending to little things, that very much of the comfort of a household depends upon the regularity with which little things are done, and Eliza, as far as lay in her power, contributed in this way a great deal to the comfort of Mrs. Shepherd's family. No one knew the value of a good servant more than Mrs. Shepherd, and no one was more ready to acknowledge it.

This then was a very busy week with Eliza ; there were a multitude of little things to be attended to as usual, and she seemed more precise than ever ; the smallest corner was visited with the brush, and woe betide any infatuated spider that had taken up his abode there, thinking that it was a safe retreat ; the legs of the chairs got an extra polish, and in fact the whole house looked as though the furniture had been only put in yesterday, it was so bright and looked so new. Eliza then, as well as Harriet, found

this a very busy week ; and as to Mrs. Shepherd she had not a moment to spare ; here and there she went through the district, and settled what was to be done in one place and another during her absence ; the different charity accounts were all arranged, for it was Mrs. Shepherd's maxim, that nothing ought to be left to take care of itself, but that order in the first instance would save a great deal of after trouble ; life she knew was very uncertain, and when people leave home, perhaps they may not live to come back ; she also was as particular and precise as her maid *Eliza* in *little things*, which made the mistress and her servant suit each other very well.

Nor must we suppose that Mrs. Bunny or Mrs. Wright were idle. As to Mrs. Bunny, she had laid by a few shillings, and she now brought them forth from the old cup in which she used to keep them in the press, to buy such things as Emily needed most. Then she washed up all her clothes with

particular care, saw particularly to her stockings, that they were all mended, for she thought that it would be a shocking disgrace to send her daughter to Mrs. Shepherd with any thing that was not at least whole and clean.

The only idle person that we have to speak of was Annie Wright. As to her poor mother, she quite slaved to put her few things into the best condition, so that she might look as well and as respectable as possible ; but not a finger did Annie put to any one of them herself. At one time she could not have borne to have seen her mother working so hard, but selfishness not only steeled her heart, but made her idle ; she thought it pleasanter just to amuse herself, and never cared that it was at the cost of her mother's toil. She even went so far as to see Mrs. Parker help her mother, and yet she never offered to put a hand to the work herself ; she was indeed a sad example of how many sins are brought into the heart by the indul-

gence of even one wrong habit. It is easy to tell where sin begins, but where is the man that can tell where it will end?

But sin brings its punishment with it, a day was coming when Annie would remember all this, and bitterly wish that her conduct had been different. Mrs. Shepherd's words about her were to come true: "Annie will have to undergo much wretchedness in life if she is unthinking and selfish."

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#### CHAPTER VII.

THE 21st of September was to come at last, even though it seemed as if the days which intervened had passed more slowly than any others in the year, and when the day arrived, the sun shone most brightly, and there was not a single cloud to be seen in the sky.

How often during the night had both Emily Bunny and Annie Wright jumped out of bed, and looked, to make sure, that

there was no likelihood of rain. There was no appearance however of wet, and the weather could not have been finer, even if they had been able to settle what it should be, so as to please themselves.

I need scarcely say, that neither of them had slept very much ; when they did close their eyes for a little while, it was to dream of their country excursion, and then to start up half frightened, lest they should oversleep themselves and so miss the train.

At half-past five Annie Wright and her mother got up, for the train by which Annie and Harriet Smith had to go started as early as seven o'clock in the morning, and they must be at Mrs. Shepherd's house at half-past six.

With much less dallying than usual, Annie dressed herself, and at six o'clock she and her mother sat down to their scanty breakfast.

There was a great difference between the mother and the daughter. As to Mrs. Wright,

she spoke scarcely a single word ; she had never before been separated from her little girl, and now that the parting was so near at hand, she felt it much more than she thought she should have done. She could hardly get down a morsel of the dry bread, which with some tea without milk or sugar, formed their scanty meal. She kept her eyes fixed on her child, as though she were about to bid her farewell for ever, and for a long time the widow had not felt so desolate. Moreover a thousand strange thoughts came into her head. What if the train should run down some bank ; or if a wheel should come off of the engine ; or if another train were to run into the one in which her daughter was ? she had heard of such things having happened, and at last her fears got so much the better of her judgment, that she thought some one, if not all, of these misfortunes must occur, and she felt half tempted not to let her daughter venture ; but the time was passing very fast, and the clock told her that

if Annie really was to go, she must make haste ; with a strong effort therefore, she laid aside all her gloomy thoughts and told Annie to tie on her bonnet, and put on her shawl, while she padlocked the carpet bag which she had borrowed to hold her clothes.

As quick as thought the child leaped up from her chair—she did not say any grace ; she was too much occupied with thoughts of her journey ; and her mother was so full of sorrow at the thought of her going, that she never remarked this ; but neither sorrow nor joy should interrupt the performance of our duties, neither should they prevent our shewing gratitude to God for His ordinary mercies, when *they* are not withheld, because we are either sorry or glad.

Mrs. Wright and Annie were not however to go to Mrs. Shepherd's house alone. They had seen Mr. and Mrs. Parker late the night before, and Annie had wished them good bye, but the old man had made up his mind to see her off, and he also had been watching

almost all night for fear of oversleeping himself.

“Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!” they now heard shouted at their door, and these sounds were accompanied by a loud knocking of Mr. Parker’s great shears—“’t is time to start.”

“’T is time indeed, Hurrah!” said Annie, as she bounded forward to meet the old man, of whom she was really very fond.

“Hurrah,” cried Mr. Parker once more, “and I’m here to carry the bag.”

Had it not been that poor old Mr. Parker’s “Hurrah” had been given with a very feeble voice, and that he was speedily admitted into the room, all the other persons in the house must have no doubt come running down, to find out what could have occasioned such an uproar at so early an hour. No one however was disturbed, and now Mrs. Wright and Annie, with Mr. Parker, all sallied forth to go as quickly as possible to Mrs. Shepherd’s house. The

bag was so heavy, and old Mr. Parker's knees were so weak, that it seemed at first as though they could never get there in time, and more than one person that they met turned round after he had passed them, to see how the old man got on. Annie and her mother had not however much to fear ; when Mr. Parker saw how anxious they looked, he stirred on at his very fastest pace, and soon laid the bag down on Mrs. Shepherd's door step. Harriet Smith was waiting for them, with her bag in the hall, and having called a cab from the next street, they all set off in it for the railway station ; Harriet Smith was in high spirits, for she was going to see her father ; so was Annie Wright, and also Mr. Parker ; the only one that looked at all sad was Mrs. Wright, who could not help feeling somewhat sorrowful at parting for the first time from her only child.

A very few minutes brought the party to the station, then the tickets had to be taken, then places to be secured, and the bags put

under the seats, in all of which, old Parker, though rather noisy, still proved himself to be very useful. And now they start ! the bell rings two or three times, the whistle of the engine seems to answer it, as much as to say, "I'm quite ready." Annie Wright claps her hands with joy, old Parker gives another Hurrah ! and the train is on its way to Cambridge, where let us hope that it will safely arrive !

We must now return to Mrs. Shepherd's house, where by this time very busy preparations were going on. Emily Bunny, who never left anything to the last moment, had all her own things packed up, and had arrived at Mrs. Shepherd's to see if she could do anything, or make herself in any way useful ; she was so much obliged to Mrs. Shepherd for taking her on this delightful trip, that she felt she could not do too much for her, and she had quite made up her mind that she would shew her gratitude by every way in her power. I need

scarcely say, how different *her* conduct was from Annie Wright's, who did not even thank her mother that morning, for all the efforts she had made to get the money to send her with Harriet Smith. Her time being thus employed, Emily Bunny did not think it very long to wait before the train started which was to convey her with Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd to Ramsgate, near which the village was, where Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd were about to stay. Time does not seem long to any who are usefully engaged; it hangs heavily on the hands of such only as are fond of being idle, and love to sit down with their hands before them, and nothing to do.

It was very pleasing to Emily to know that she could make herself useful. She helped to cut the sandwiches which were to be eaten on the journey, she cleaned up and put by the breakfast things, and was so active and obliging, that even Eliza, Mrs. Shepherd's servant, particular as she was, was

very much pleased and felt quite comfortable at the thought of having so active and tidy a girl to help her.

Eight! nine! ten! eleven o'clock came, and all was prepared for the Ramsgate train. Every box and bag had the name and direction plainly written upon it, and it was time to start. There was a nice one-horse carriage which a friend of Mrs. Shepherd's had lent for the occasion, and a cab for the servants and the luggage, and a short time brought the happy party to the station at London bridge. Here too, there was a great bustle, the bell rang, the engine whistled, and even then some persons might be seen running along the platform near the train, some crying out for a box, and some for a bag—all which was occasioned by their being late. Mr. Shepherd however, and his party, were not amongst the number; they were safely and comfortably seated in their carriages, all their luggage was in, and they felt how true was the remark which Mr. Shepherd's fa-

ther used often make: "Better be five minutes before your time, than one minute after it!"

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE trains which conveyed the two parties arrived in safety at their destination. Mr. Smith was at the Cambridge station to meet his daughter, and travel with her the remainder of the way. He was a very kind person, and so he gave Annie Wright a very cordial reception, which made such an impression on the little girl that she thought she had never seen so nice a man before; indeed she even preferred him to poor old Parker, whose frequent kindnesses to her she seemed to have quite forgotten. To selfish people the proverb will particularly apply, which says: "*out of sight, out of mind!*" Nor, was her happiness at all diminished when she arrived at Mr. Smith's house.

Mrs. Smith was goodnature itself, and Ellen her daughter seemed as though she could at once become Annie's friend, while all around were flower sand trees, and a thousand things quite new to the child, who had been brought up all her life in town.

Annie Wright had taken as great a fancy to Ellen Smith as to her father ; we may judge then of her delight when she heard that Ellen was to have holidays while she staid, and moreover, that she was to sleep in a small bed in her room. With all this she was quite charmed, and the day quickly passed, in going about with her new companion to see the garden, the farm, and a multitude of things which afforded her the greatest delight.

We need not follow Annie Wright through every day of her visit at Mr. Smith's. Part of the time she was to be found in the garden with Ellen, who told her the names of all the flowers, and part, wandering by the stream which flowed peacefully along at the bottom

of the little lawn. Ellen shewed her every pretty walk around, and often gathered together her playfellows for a tea party in the summer house. The apples also were ripe and dropping from the trees, and Ellen and her companion used to go out every morning and evening with a basket to gather up all they could find upon the ground. Almost every day there was something new, and Annie was so happy that she often thought and said, she should like to remain always where she then was, and not to return to London any more.

But we must not think from this, that the little girl entirely forgot her mother, of whom she was very very fond, and to whom she had always shewn the greatest attention until this spirit of selfishness took such hold upon her heart.

Very often Annie Wright used to say to Ellen Smith, "How much I should like, Ellen, to have mother here, where she could see and smell these beautiful flowers! How

much I should like my mother to walk by the side of this pretty stream!" and she had received with the greatest delight two letters which the widow had written to her, in one of which she had enclosed three pennyworth of postage stamps, which she told her little girl was all that she could gather together, and which she could change into money, and have to spend in any way she liked.

But Annie Wright seldom thought of her mother's hard work and hard fare, and of her close room and pale thin face. She would have liked her mother to have been with her in the country, but she did not like to think of keeping her mother company in town. The first would have cost her nothing, it would have rather added to her enjoyment; the second would have cost her something, she must have exchanged the flowers and cool breezes of the country for the hot air of the London streets, and of a London room.

Had Annie been an unselfish child, she would have thought with pleasure of return-

ing to her mother again, and often wished to have been with her, even for half an hour, to comfort her and cheer her up. Many a selfish person wishes others to be happy, provided they themselves have not to give up anything for them, no one but the unselfish man will ever think of giving another pleasure by sacrificing something himself. How truly this was the case with Annie Wright we can see from her conduct, when she had to return home. The prospect of seeing her mother seemed to have lost all its pleasure, from the thought that she must leave the country and return to London ; and instead of looking forward with joy to meeting again one that loved her so fondly, she fretted so much during the last few days of her visit that even Mr. Smith spoke to her about it, and told her how sinful it must be in the sight of God.

There was one consideration, however, which cheered up Annie Wright's mind when she thought of returning to London again.

Ellen Smith had told her one evening that her father intended to go up to town very soon after Annie's return, and that she was to go with him, provided she pleased him in the mean time, and did nothing to prevent her being given so great an indulgence. This afforded Annie the greatest pleasure, and the thought of taking Ellen Smith about London, and shewing her some of the wonderful things there, seemed to take away some at least of her sorrow at going back. Even though there were many sights which were quite beyond her means, still Annie knew that there was very much to be seen in London for a very little money, and even if it were only the outside of Westminster Abbey, or the New Houses of Parliament, or St. Paul's with its splendid dome, all these would be new to Ellen Smith, and she could shew her the way to them. Besides which, Annie knew that they might walk through the Pantheon and the Soho Bazaar, with all their autiful stalls, and look at a great many

handsome carriages in the parks, and see many splendid things in the shop windows, and what greater treat could she have than that of taking her companion to shew her all these?

There was, however, to be a greater pleasure than this. The Great Exhibition in Hyde Park was now open; under its immense roof of glass were gathered together the greatest number of valuable and curious things that had ever been seen in any one place, and as Mr. Smith and Ellen were to come to town principally for the sake of seeing this wonderful Exhibition, Annie hoped to go with them, and shew them where some of the most curious sights were to be seen, for she had already been there once, and spent the whole day from morning to night. What pleasure it would be to shew Mr. Smith where all the ploughs and carts were, and to shew Ellen the great diamond, and the crystal fountain, with the gold fish swimming in its basin, and the stuffed figures of a number

of little animals out on a shooting party ; and above all, some wonderful dolls, dressed in the grandest style, and such as no one could ever expect to see in any country place ! Annie had often entertained Ellen with an account of what she had seen herself, and she was now delighted at the prospect of being show-woman on this occasion.

This then became by degrees the main subject of conversation between the two little girls, and Ellen Smith questioned Annie so much about the Exhibition, and made her describe all she knew about it so accurately, that she thought she could almost find out each wonderful thing by herself, if she could only get to London.

Thus then the time wore on, and the day drew near when Harriet Smith and Annie Wright must return to London. A letter had arrived, saying that Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd would return home in about a week, and they expected that their servant Harriet would be there the day before their arrival, to as to have all things ready.

Annie Wright determined then, as soon as she knew this, that she would make the most of every day. She went again and again to each favourite spot, she never missed morning or evening being present at the milking of the cows, she seemed determined to do as much in the last week as she had done in all the previous time.

The last day however was the busiest of all. She visited every flower; she went hither and thither through every nook and corner; she even went so far as to kiss Neddy, the donkey on which she had had so many pleasant rides.

As to Harriet Smith, and her little sister Ellen, they also were very busy. Harriet had to wish "Good Bye" to several friends, and Ellen had to make some cakes, and pack up some fruit for her little friend.

I need scarcely say, that Annie Wright and Ellen Smith lay awake for a long time that night. They talked of the pleasant days they had enjoyed, and not a little of Ellen's

intended trip to London ; and long after Ellen had dropped asleep, Annie lay awake, until at last she began to cry, and before she dropped off to sleep, completely wet her pillow with her tears.

Brightly shone the Autumn sun on the morning that the travellers were to return to town, and at the proper time round drove Mr. Smith's cart, and both the bags were packed ready for the journey.

Annie had eaten but little breakfast, and was the only one that had not done justice to the good meal which Mrs. Smith had spread upon the table. As to Harriet, she also might have preferred remaining in the country, and if any one had cause to cry, she was the person, because she was leaving her own home and mother, whereas Annie Wright was going back to her's ; but Harriet knew that her duty called her to London, that her mistress was kind to her, and she knew how to value that. She also knew that fretting could do no good, so she en-

livened the breakfast table with her cheerful look and hearty laugh, and prevented the morning meal from being sad.

And now the bags are put in, Mrs. Smith kisses Harriet and Annie, Ellen jumps in, for she is to accompany them to the station, crack goes Mr. Smith's whip, and in a moment they have turned out of the gate and are on their way to Cambridge, to take the train to return to town again.

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#### CHAPTER IX.

LET us now return to Emily Bunny, who had left London with Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd for the sea-side. After a very pleasant journey the party arrived at Ramsgate, and thence they started for the village where they were to stay.

It could scarcely be called a village, it was so small, it was rather a hamlet, as it consisted of only about twenty houses, be-

sides the church, the parsonage, the coast-guard station, and one large house inhabited by Mr. and Mrs. Young, with their servants.

The church was small, but quite large enough for the place; it was quite new, and was built of cut stone, with a very pretty church-yard surrounding it, which was approached by a broad gravel path with a wide border, in which grew some beautiful flowers.

In former times there was no church in this hamlet, and the people had to walk more than two miles every Sunday, while the aged and infirm could never get to church at all. When the wind was favourable, the poor old people could hear the bells of the parish church ringing merrily; they seemed to say with a joyful voice, "Come and pray and praise!" but alas! the way was so long, and they were so feeble and old, they felt that it was no use for the bells to speak so cheerfully to them.

Things were in this sad state when Mr.

and Mrs. Young came to reside in the place. They first took a small cottage perched up on the top of a cliff, but by degrees they added room after room, until at last the little cottage had grown into an elegant and handsome house. But Mr. and Mrs. Young were not selfish, and while they made their own house so comfortable, they also set about doing something for the benefit of their neighbours.

Mr. Young built a beautiful school-house, with a garden in front of it, and here Mrs. Young used to keep school herself. Day after day she attended regularly, and denied herself many a pleasant excursion, rather than that her little scholars should miss their customary lesson ; and in doing these acts of self-denial, she felt that God was pleased, since her only object was His glory, and the good of her fellow creatures. Nor was she without reward—some of her little pupils died, and they were so happy, so peaceful, so sweetly looking up to Jesus as they departed, that Mrs. Young felt she had been

blessed by God. Oh how sweet is the feeling that God accepts our labours, this is more than payment for all the trouble and cost we may be at on His behalf.

But the school-room, beautiful as it was, was only a very small part of what these good people did for the place where they had come to live. The great want of the village was a church, but the few poor fishermen and coast-guards could never collect money enough for so great a work. This Mr. Young knew, and he therefore determined to undertake the matter himself, and pay out of his own pocket for a church and parsonage, and to endow the new church with a sum of money sufficiently large to keep a clergyman in comfort. When Mr. and Mrs. Young made this determination, they did not sit down and think *how little* it could be done for, but they calculated *how much* they could possibly afford, and they laid by that sum. The consequence of Mr. Young's having made his calculation in this way was, that the

new church was every thing that it ought to be. It was built of beautiful stone, it was fitted with every thing of the very best kind, and any person entering its sacred walls must have felt that it was indeed a house set apart for the worship of the Lord.

In former times there used to stand on the spot where Mr. Young built the church, a large pillar, which was intended as a land mark, or a sign by which the sailors who passed that way could steer, but now the church answered the same purpose, and that, a great deal better, for it was much larger and loftier than the pillar that used to occupy its place. Mr. Young used to say, that he hoped it would be useful to help other voyagers besides such as passed and repassed upon the great deep ; all who were seeking the shore of the land of life and peace and joy.

Such then, was the village, or hamlet, where Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, with Eliza their servant, and Emily Bunny arrived, for

their sea-side trip. It was late, almost dark, as they ascended the steep hill that led them from the sea-shore to the top of the cliff on which the parsonage stood ; little could be seen, but still there was much that pleased Emily, to whom every thing was very new. In the first place the silence that reigned around was so unlike the bustle of the London streets ; and then the distant sound of the waves as they gently broke upon the sea shore made a kind of music in her ear, listening to which she dropped gently off into the sweetest sleep. The next morning Emily rose with a light and joyful heart ; she set about the work that Eliza, Mrs. Shepherd's servant, gave her to do, with good spirit ; and she now began to put into practice the good resolution which she had made, of shewing Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd by every means in her power, how thankful she was for their kindness to her.

In the afternoon Mr. Young called to see Mr. Shepherd, and the old gentleman invited

him to dine at his house, and as Mrs. Young who accompanied him, pressed Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, they determined to go.

What a happy evening that was for Emily Bunny ! Mr. Young's gardener had a little daughter who accompanied Emily to the sea-shore, and helped her to pick up sea-weed, and curious pebbles, and pointed out to her all the different kinds of ships sailing by.

How beautiful it was to ramble along that smooth shore, and listen to the waves rippling upon it, and breathe the bracing pure air ! Emily felt it so, and she never thought so much of the greatness of God as now, when she looked out upon the great waters, and saw that they stretched out as far as her eye could see, and seemed to become one with the blue sky in the long distance.

She ventured to tell the gardener's little daughter Mary, what she felt, and how glad was she to hear, that her little companion had thoughts just like her own !

“ I come down here very often,” said little

Mary, "and as I look across the great sea, I think of the far distant land, of which our minister so often speaks, and sometimes I kneel down in a little cave that is in the rocks, and I pray God to bring me safe to that blessed place."

"And do you ever lie awake at night listening to the noise of the waves?" said Emily; "I suppose you do not, you hear it so often, and people don't much care for what they can hear or see at any time."

"Oh yes, I often lie awake," said Mary, "I am quite awake, even though my eyes are shut, and then I think I can hear people talking; once or twice I thought I heard distant music; and when I told father of it in the morning, he laughed and said I must have been asleep, but I told him I was not, I was quite sure I had been awake, and then he said, he thought it must be the waves breaking in the distance, which when people were half asleep, often sounded like music."

"The sea is very wonderful," said Emily

Bunny, "does it never come any higher than where we are standing now? I wonder that it does not burst in upon the land and cover everything with water—I see nothing to stop it."

"Sometimes it rises a little higher," said the gardener's daughter, "and at times when there is a great storm, the waves rush in just like giants, but they always break and go back again, as though they were afraid to come beyond a certain place; but then," said the little girl, warming up, "then there is great fun along the downs, for the wind catches up the white foam off the waves, and makes it run so fast along the grass, and all we children from the village chase it; we call all the great flakes our geese, and sometimes we run after them for hours."

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#### CHAPTER X.

IT can be easily imagined how very pleasantly Emily Bunny spent the time when she was

in such a charming place, and had so nice a friend. As to Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, they also spent their time most delightfully. In Mr. and Mrs. Young they found persons after their own heart, who loved to talk with them of good things, and they spent many a pleasant afternoon and evening with them. Indeed it was almost impossible not to love them. Their servants all obeyed them from love ; their neighbours all put their hands to their hats, or curtsied to them, not only from respect, but also from love ; and whatever they wished to have done was always set about cheerfully, and with evident pleasure, for every one around wished to serve them from this delightful principle of "love." Mr. Shepherd could see in a thousand little instances how deep the affection of Mr. and Mrs. Young's servants were for them, one very pretty instance of which we may mention here.

There was a beautiful summer house built upon the edge of the cliff—here the old gen-

tleman used to sit every fine day, and read the newspaper, while Mrs. Young did her work. It was indeed a delightful spot, overlooking the sea, and from it could be seen sometimes as many as a hundred ships sailing to and fro ; Mr. Shepherd used now and then to go with Mr. Young to this summer house, in the morning ; and one day what was his surprise on entering it with the old gentleman to find the appearance of the interior entirely changed.

From the roof there hung a beautiful ornament of roses, and the wall was decorated all round with festoons made of the same beautiful flowers. But the most striking object in the summer house was the seat on which Mr. Young usually sat, and the table on which generally rested his spectacles and newspaper, with a telescope through which he used to enjoy the sea view.

This chair was beautifully wreathed with flowers, which had been contributed from the gardens of all the cottagers around, and

here and there could be traced the figures 75, for on this day Mr. Young was seventy-five years old. There was something on the table also, which immediately attracted Mr. Shepherd's eye. It was a large parcel, covered with a very pretty piece of needle-work, it seemed like a box, but what it could contain, all were at a loss to guess.

As soon as Mr. and Mrs. Young and Mr. Shepherd were seated, they looked about them at the handsome decorations, and when they had taken a survey of them, proceeded to open the box. They first admired the needlework, which contained some very pretty verses on Mr. Young's birthday, and which was an offering from all the children of the school ; they then raised the lid of the box, and Mrs. Young drew forth from it a most beautiful model of the church, which was so perfect that it excited the admiration and praises of each of the party.

This model of the church had been made by a ship carpenter in the village, who was

quite famous for his skill in carving, and all the poor people around had contributed something towards paying for it. As to the ship carpenter himself, he had worked at it two whole days without any payment, and that was *his* share in the birthday present.

It was quite wonderful to see how exactly this model of the church was made, the very nails were in the doors, and every slate on the roof was distinctly marked out.

But the most wonderful part of all was yet to come. On examining it very closely, Mr. Shepherd, whose sight was better than Mr. or Mrs. Young's, perceived, as he thought, a little crack down the side—on turning the little model round, he found that there was another exactly corresponding ; and then, he perceived that the front part was made to slide ; he soon raised it up, and to their great astonishment they found that the interior as well as the exterior was a perfect model ; the roof was there with its dark oak rafters, and all the seats, even the organ and

the pulpit ; everything was exactly as it stood in the church itself.

This however was not the only token of love that Mr. Young received from the villagers that day. After dinner all the village children assembled at the school room, and marched in procession to the kind old gentleman's house. There, in the garden outside the windows of the dining room they formed a circle, and led by one of the elder girls they sang a sweet song, which had been written for the occasion, and then they concluded all by three cheers for Mr. and Mrs. Young, and a wish that they might be spared to see a great many more birthdays, and live amongst them a long long time.

Mr. Young on his part did something which made the birthday very pleasant to these little folk, for he went to a drawer where he used to keep his silver and brought out thirty shillings, one for each child in the school. This, as you may suppose, was quite a treasure to children so young and so poor,

and on receiving it they burst out into another loud hurrah, and three cheers more for their kind old friend.

Who can imagine scenes more delightful than these, where love seemed to fill every heart, and to send forth its sweet music from every tongue? but such scenes are, alas! too seldom witnessed; few are so kind and generous as this benevolent old man, few so self-denying for the good of others as his wife, the law of love is too little known, and so the pleasures of love are too seldom seen,

In such a delightful place as this it will be easily believed that Emily Bunny's holiday passed most pleasantly. Indeed it flew away so fast, that it was very near the time for returning, before she seemed to have been there more than a day or two. Time that is well occupied always passes quickly, no one ever complains that the days or the months are too long when they are usefully and happily engaged.

They passed thus quickly for all Mr.

Shepherd's party. Eliza, their maid, used to find time for a walk every day by the sea shore ; Mr. Shepherd was sometimes writing, sometimes visiting the poor cottagers, and sometimes driving out with Mr. Young to see the neighbourhood ; and as to Mrs. Shepherd, we need not say much of her, for every one that knew her saw she was engaged at something useful from morning to night, and no one ever thought for a moment that the time passed heavily with her.

And now we must come to the last evening that Emily Bunny had to spend at this happy place. It was not very hurried, for every thing had been arranged and packed up in good time, and Mrs. Shepherd told her little maid that she might go down to the sands and enjoy the sea breeze, as this was the last opportunity she could have of doing so.

This permission was particularly delightful, because the gardener's daughter was with her that evening to tea, and they could enjoy last stroll together.

Away then they went, and were soon by the side of the rippling waves, which seemed to Emily to be twice as lovely as ever, now that she was likely to leave them so soon. But they did not long remain standing by the brink of the water. They turned away and wandered among the rocks, turning in and out as though they were looking for some particular place. And so indeed they were. They were on their way to a cave, which could not be reached except by thus winding in and out, climbing over some rocks, and jumping over others, all of which, however, the children liked very well.

This was the cave to which the gardener's daughter told Emily she used often to come to pray, and sing her hymns, and read such chapters as she could understand. She had already brought her companion to it very often, and now they chose this as the last place they would go to together, for by far the sweetest talks they ever had, were here.

A few minutes' exertion brought them to

it, and they felt half happy, half sad, as they sat down hand in hand on the ledge of rock which formed their usual seat, for they both thought that they might not ever see each other again.

“Perhaps I shall never see you any more,” said the gardener’s little daughter, who was the first to break the silence. “Perhaps you will never come here again, and even if you do, perhaps I shall be dead.”

Emily did not answer her for a long time, for her heart was almost too full to speak ; but at last she said, “Perhaps we shall not meet again, but I am sure Mary I shall always remember you, and in a short time I may be able to write you a letter, and next to seeing people, hearing from them is the pleasantest thing that can be.” “Yes,” said little Mary, “hearing from people must be very pleasant ; I wish my little sister that died last year could write to me ; but I like to see every one I love, and to put my hand in theirs, and to look into their faces, and

talk to them ; you cannot do all this with a letter, even though it were the longest one that ever was written.”

“ Do you think,” said Mary, “ that you will come down here next year. If you will only say that *you think* you will come, if you will only say ‘ *Perhaps*,’ I will count all the days as they go by, and then you can tell me more of what Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd have taught you ? ”

“ Well, *perhaps*,” said Emily, “ but mind, I only say ‘ *Perhaps*,’ but I do not *think* it very likely, for even if Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd should come, I have no reason to expect that they will bring me with them.”

“ There’s a good girl,” said Mary, kissing Emily Bunny, “ I will remember that you said ‘ *Perhaps*,’ and at the end of every week, or when I come here by myself, I will say, she said ‘ *Perhaps*.’ ”

“ And now,” said the gardener’s little daughter, “ as I come here so often to say my prayers, and as we have so often said our

prayers, and sung our hymns in this quiet place, let us say our prayers and sing our hymns here together for the last time."

So they both knelt down, and joined their hands together, and each said her evening prayer, and when one had finished, the other said *Amen* to it; and with one voice, and hand in hand, they sang the evening hymn, which was a great favourite with each of them.

The waves were still breaking softly upon the shore and amongst the rocks, and they too seemed as though they joined with the children in singing their Maker's praise; and now as the tide was coming in, the two girls had to return as quickly as they could, for it used to rise very fast in some places, and surround the rocks before any one could think that it had come in so far.

"We shall see each other to-morrow morning," said Emily, "for I heard Mrs. Shepherd say that your brother was to drive in the cart with our boxes, and you are to go with him."

“Oh yes,” said Mary, “I am to go,” and then, putting her mouth quite close to her ear, she said, “Remember Emily, you said, ‘*Perhaps.*’”

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## CHAPTER XI.

THAT night Emily Bunny staid awake as long as she could, listening to her favourite waves, and dropped asleep at last thinking of little Mary’s words, “Perhaps you will never come here again, and even if you do, perhaps I shall be dead.” This thought of little Mary’s death seemed to root itself in her mind, and then she began to say to herself, “She thinks so much about good and holy things, and is so fond of her Bible, perhaps God will never let her grow up, but take her away to heaven, to be always with himself. Perhaps, as she said, we shall never meet again!”

This idea was the last in Emily’s mind,

and we need not be at all surprised if it appeared in her dreams. We often dream of what we have been thinking of late, and in her sleep Emily saw the gardener's daughter lying very ill in her little bed ; then she died, and was buried in the church yard, quite close to the church itself, and a number of children threw white lilies upon the grave ; then she heard music, soft murmuring music high above her head, and she looked up and saw Mary with a thousand other children, each one with a golden harp, and each one with a crown of gold ; then they vanished all away, and some one blew a great trumpet, and a voice cried out, much louder than any one she had ever heard before, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ! "

Half sorrowful and half pleased was Emily with her dreams when she awoke in the morning ; she did not like the idea of little Mary's dying, and yet she thought how blessed a thing it would be for her to have that crown and harp of gold, and join that

beautiful choir with her sweet voice. "I like Mary very much," she said, "I should like her to live with me always, I am so fond of her, I would give her anything I have, but Mary would be far happier in heaven than with any person on the earth." Emily was an unselfish child, she thought more of what would be of advantage to others than to herself.

But Mary herself soon appeared ; breakfast was over, and the cart for the luggage was to be at the door in a very few minutes. Emily would have very much liked to have told her her dream, but she thought they felt sad enough at parting, without making themselves sadder, speaking about that. She therefore said nothing about it ; but as soon as the cart drew up at the door, helped to put the luggage upon it, and looked as cheerful as she could.

And after all, their ride to the station was merry enough. Mary's brother, Richard, was so full of fun, that it was impossible to

be very sad, and he helped to make the ride much more cheerful than it could otherwise have been. Dick was a good lad, and every one loved him, for with all his fun, he never said or did an unkind thing, and was always ready to lend a hand to any one that was in need of help. But to his sister Mary, he was especially kind, and had been never known to do or say a single rude thing to her ; and when they all arrived at the station, Dick was politeness itself in handing down Emily from the cart, and in looking after every box and parcel and cloak.

There are some persons who think that politeness is to be found only amongst gentlefolks, but true politeness is very often seen amongst the very humblest of the poor. Every one can be not only civil, but also polite. A man that has but one chair can be polite in the way he offers it to you ; a man that has to answer a question can be polite in the tone of voice in which he does it ; and Dick, although only a poor

gardener's son, was polite in everything he said and did.

Here then Emily and Mary were to part, and Dick, who saw that their hearts were full, pretended to be very busy about the boxes, and when that was done, about settling the harness ; he thought they would not say all they wished if he remained, and being so truly polite, he moved away. And now they each gave the other a little present which they had prepared. Mary pulled out of her pocket the prayer book, the psalms in which she used so often to sing in the little cave, and Emily gave her in return a small hymn book, which she had bought in London with some money which she had managed after long waiting to save up. These were their keepsakes to each other, and surely no nicer ones could they have given. Emily was pleased to think that her nice book would be every Sunday within the walls of the sweet church, and that Mary would read out of it ; while she in turn was

delighted that her friend should have something to remind her of their pleasant hours in the sea-side cave, where they had so often sung together many of those lovely psalms.

Railway journeys are performed so fast, that we need not stop long to describe them, more especially as they are generally very uninteresting, and there is not very much in them to amuse.

Away then started the train, the engine whistled and screamed and pulled, the carriages flew along, and in the course of four hours Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, their servant Eliza, and Emily Bunny, found themselves in London once again.

Let it not be supposed that Emily found the journey tedious and dull. It is true she had some sad thoughts, especially when she remembered her little companion's words: "And even if you do come, perhaps I shall be dead;" but she longed very much to see her dear mother, whose kindness to her had never failed, and who had done everything

for her from her infancy, that dear mother whose devoted love she felt that she could never sufficiently repay.

Emily had not forgotten her during her stay at the sea side. She had very often spoken to little Mary about her, and she had searched the shore very often to find the prettiest pebbles and shells to bring home to her. How often did she say: "How gladly would I be in London all this hot day and do up mother's room, if she could only be here to enjoy the fresh breeze and see the splendid ships."

As the train neared London, Emily felt the desire to see her mother grow stronger and stronger, until at last, fast as it went, it did not seem to go half fast enough.

When she arrived it was indeed a joyful meeting. Emily's mother had come to the station to meet her, and the tears rolled down their cheeks, they were so happy at being with each other once again. There were few persons in London, as large as it is, who

were happier that evening than Emily Bunny and her mother. The widow had bought a small tea cake in honour of Emily's arrival, and Emily unpacked her trunk and produced two new laid eggs, which she knew would be a great treat. To these they sat down, and their meal was enlivened with Emily's account of the sea, and the cave, and her companion, little Mary, the gardener's daughter. Emily's mother had also much to tell ; but she left the principal part of the talking to her child, whom she encouraged to give an account of every thing that had happened.

Mrs. Bunny was very much interested in all her little girl had to say, but that which seemed to please her most of all was her daughter's account of her little companion Mary.

“ She must be a very good child,” said Mrs. Bunny, “ and a great blessing to her parents ; I am glad you met with so nice a companion, and I hope you will know some-

thing more of her as you grow up. Perhaps" said Mrs. Bunny, "if my washing should improve, and be very good, I might be able to ask her to come and stay for a week with you, if her father can afford to pay her fare up and down again."

At such a delightful prospect Emily could not contain herself, but jumped off her chair, to kiss her kind mother again and again. She did this with such hearty good will that the old woman's cap was turned almost right round upon her head, and was very near tumbling off upon the ground. Indeed this might have been its fate had not the little girl suddenly stopped, and the tears came into her eyes. "Oh mother," said she, "Mary said 'Perhaps she should soon die,' and after all I may never see her here, never kneel down with her in that beautiful cave again."

While Emily was saying this, Mrs. Bunny had restored her cap to its original position, and seemed as though nothing had happened,

except that she had become a little redder in the face than she had been before. She was now somewhat surprised to find how sudden a change had come over her little girl, that all her smiles had vanished and tears had come in their place.

“Why, Emily, what is the matter? you were laughing a moment ago, and so full of happiness that you nearly pushed my poor cap off my head!”

Then she told her mother how solemnly her little companion had spoken to her about her death. “And oh! mother,” said she, “it *would* be very sad indeed if I were never to see dear Mary again, or if she could never come here, when you were so very kind as to say that you would ask her when you could afford it.”

Mrs. Bunny could not bear to see her daughter so sad, and so she set about comforting her as well as she could.

“I do not think,” said she to Emily, “that your little friend Mary is likely to die so

soon ; was she ever ill while you were at the sea-side ? is she a delicate looking little girl, or is this only a fancy of yours, Emily ? I think Mary is likely to grow up much stronger than most children you know, for she lives in good pure air, and has plenty of wholesome food, and can go to bed in proper time, and very few poor children in London have all these advantages."

" Do you think, mother, the sea air will make her grow up strong ? for if you do " said Emily, after a short pause, " we will not ask her to come and see us ; perhaps it might kill her, or do her some harm."

" Oh ! a week here could not hurt her," said Mrs. Bunny, " and from what I have heard of your little friend, I think she will grow up to be a strong woman, and perhaps you and she may go to service together, and save up money enough to go and live in a cottage somewhere near your favourite cave ; so don't fret over Mary as if she were going to die to-morrow."

This judgment of Mrs. Bunny's about the probable state of Mary's health quite satisfied Emily for the time, and the remainder of the evening passed away as happily as possible ; the shells and pebbles were duly installed into their proper places upon the mantle piece ; sundry pieces of sea-weed were pinned up against the wall ; Emily and her mother kissed each other fifty times, and the evening concluded, as it had always done in Mrs. Bunny's room, with reading a chapter from the Bible, and with prayer to God, in which Mrs. Bunny did not forget to thank Him for His providential care over her daughter, for having made her go out, and come in, in safety, for having provided her with such kind friends, and in general, for all the mercies He had vouchsafed.

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## CHAPTER XII.

WE must now beg the reader to return to Annie Wright, who came back to London

the same day as Emily Bunny, but in a very different temper of mind.

No one in the same carriage with her could have ever guessed that she was returning to a kind mother, or that she had any one in London to care the least about her. So melancholy did she look, that a merry farmer who sat with his wife in the same carriage, began to pity her, and asked her what made her so sad.

To this very natural question Annie Wright could return no answer ; her common sense told her that she had no reason for crying, and that she could not expect any one to condole with her, because she was returning to a kind mother who sacrificed all her own comfort and did every thing in her power to make her happy.

Three or four times did the farmer ask Annie Wright the cause of her sorrow ; and at last not getting any answer, he concluded that she must be a naughty girl returning to school.

Now Farmer Greenacre was not the man to like any person's crying without reason, he thought that there was trouble enough in the world, without people's making more for themselves ; so concluding that his little fellow traveller had nothing really to cry for, for that if she had, she would not have continued silent when he asked her so kindly what was the matter, he began to imitate a crying child, which he did so well, that Harriet Smith could not help laughing, and Annie Wright felt how ridiculous she must look.

“ Look thee here, lass,” said the Farmer, “ this is what thee's like,” whereon he made the dreadful face again.

Annie could bear this no longer, especially as they just then drew up at a large station and several other persons seemed to be coming into their carriage, so she pulled out her handkerchief, and after darting an angry look or two at the jovial farmer, she dried up her eyes.

“ There now,” said the Farmer, “ thee’s a prettier lass by half than when thee set out, and I make no doubt but thee ’ll improve as we get along ; ” and so saying he offered Annie two or three large red apples, which he produced from the depths of a capacious pocket. “ Take them, my lass,” said Farmer Greenacre, “ and I hope thee ’ll never have more cause to cry than what thee’s had to day.”

As Farmer Greenacre was going up to London, Annie Wright did not venture to break out into actual crying any more ; whenever she was on the point of beginning, a look at his jolly face, and the remembrance of how well it could imitate her, kept her quiet ; especially as she saw that he looked at her from time to time, although he was talking very loud at the other end of the carriage about pigs and sheep, and a wonderful team of horses, which he declared was the finest team in all England.

It would be very pleasant if we could say

that Annie gave up her bad temper with her tears, but alas ! she did not, and her cheeks were blubbered and her temper cross when the train rolled in to the station at London. It is true she was not a little pleased at having arrived ; she felt that it would be a great relief to get out of Farmer Greenacre's sight, but she experienced no delightful joy like Emily Bunny's, at the prospect of meeting her mother.

And here, at the station, her mother was ; much thinner and paler than she had ever appeared before. Indeed she was so much altered that Annie, occupied as her mind was with her fancied troubles, could not but perceive it. The sight of her mother's pale face, and the joy that she shewed on meeting her daughter once again, seemed to stir up all the little girl's old feelings of love for her parent, for she ran to her and kissed her with a hearty good will. For a few moments Annie Wright forgot her selfishness ; how happy would it have been for herself and for her

mother, if this improved state of mind did not pass so quickly away !

As old Mr. Parker was very unwell, and had been keeping his bed for some days, he was not there to carry home the bag—this however was not his fault ; he knew that Annie was to return that day, and had once or twice endeavoured to get up to accompany Mrs. Wright to the station. His wife told him he was too weak to go, but he would insist on trying, until at last she hid away his coat and hat, as the only effectual means of keeping him at home, whereupon he threatened to cut up the bed curtains with his shears, and at last began to cry like a child.

It was well for him, however, that he was thus kept within doors, as had he gone out he must have died ; for he had been suffering from a bad attack of fever.

Mrs. Wright then, and Annie, had to carry the luggage home as best they could between them, and after a long and weary

walk, they arrived very tired at their own little room.

There, Annie found every thing still remaining exactly as she had left them, the only change was in her mother's face—but that was sadly altered. She was both paler and thinner than she used to be, and coughed continually. The cough was not a loud long one, but a very short cough, that used to come very often.

The widow however made no complaint, but busied herself in getting tea, while Annie went in to see Mr. Parker. This she was not forbidden to do, as the old man's fever had not been infectious ; but Emily Bunny, or any other thoughtful girl, would have helped her mother at her work.

“ Hurrah ! hurrah ! ” cried the old man, as he saw Annie Wright come in at the door —“ so you have come back at last ; I thought you would never come.”

Annie answered the old man's salutation with a kiss, for she was truly fond of him ;

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indeed, next to her mother she loved him better than any one else.

“ Oh yes ! ” said she, “ I have come back ; but I am rather sorry that the holidays are over so soon, and I should like to have staid much longer with Ellen Smith ; this is not half so nice a place to live in as the country ; I am sure I shall not be half so happy ; ”— and thus the little girl ran on, and might have continued stringing together sentence after sentence, each showing more than the one before it of how discontented and selfish a spirit she was, had not Mrs. Parker interrupted her by saying—

“ Come Annie, the country is a very agreeable place to be in, and we have been shut up here all the summer, tell us something about the green fields, and the pleasant places where you have been ; it is far better to stay at home all the summer than to go away and come back making such sad complaints.”

Even poor old Parker himself seemed

somewhat disappointed at Annie's complaints, for he turned his head to the wall as though he did not care to hear any more about her country trip.

Annie did not however seem at all to mind Mrs. Parker's wish about hearing something pleasanter than mere complaints, for she continued in much the same strain whenever she spoke, until at length old Mr. Parker seemed to lose all patience, and told his wife that Annie Wright had come home a very naughty child, and must be sent into her own room. "I am getting sleepy now," said the old man, "take her away."

At another time this would have been most mortifying to Annie, she could have pictured to herself few things more miserable than offending her kind old friend; now however this did not seem to trouble her very much, and as Mrs. Parker opened the door for her to walk out, she did not betray the least sorrow, but turned into her mother's room as though nothing had happened.

This was afterwards the cause of many a sorrowful moment to Annie Wright; and when the old man was dead and buried, she often thought how earnestly he had looked at her that evening and said, "Annie, do tell me about the green fields—Annie, do tell me about the river and the trees!" Not many weeks were to pass before the little girl was to feel the bitterness of having had a selfish spirit, and of having shown it towards one, now removed by death, far far beyond the reach of the kind words which she would so gladly speak, were he only alive to hear.

Mrs. Wright was as glad to see Annie as Mrs. Bunny to see Emily once again; and many were the questions which she asked her about Mr. Smith, and all she had seen or done since the memorable morning on which, with Mr. Parker to carry the bag, they had all started for Mr. Shepherd's house.

We rejoice to be able to say, that Annie Wright's fondness for her parent overcame

to a considerable extent the disagreeable frame of mind in which she was, and she made the evening tolerably pleasant to her mother. Now and then, it is true, she threw in a discontented expression, and looked around the little room as though she were drawing a very unfavourable comparison between it and the one in which she had slept at Mr. Smith's, but on the whole she was certainly better than could have been expected by any person having seen her a little while before in Mr. Parker's room. At last bed time came, the evening had closed in, the hands of the clock pointed to half-past nine, and Mrs. Wright knelt down and said a prayer with her daughter before she lay down to rest.

Some persons fret themselves to sleep, and some drop off into slumber because they are weary, and Annie Wright, who was tired in the first place, and still fretting in the next place, was soon fast asleep in her own bed.

Ten! Eleven! Twelve! One! The clock

struck one, and then she awoke ; but where was her mother, who generally was in bed at the farthest by eleven.

Annie called her, but got no answer ; she was afraid to speak again, but lay down for a few moments and covered her head with the bed clothes. Anything was however better than remaining in her present state of uncertainty, so she put out her hand to grope for the box of matches which generally lay by the bed side ; these she fortunately found without much difficulty, and having lit one, she perceived her mother still sitting in her chair ; her work was in her hands, and every now and then she appeared as though she were putting a stitch in it, but the candle had quite burnt out, and Annie saw that her mother's head hung down upon her breast.

For some minutes the little girl was too frightened to get out of bed, for although terrified before by missing her mother from her side, she was more so now by this strange sight ; at length, however, she crept very

softly out of bed, and after looking around her very carefully, she touched her shoulder.

This had not the desired effect, for Mrs. Wright did not awake, she merely began to draw her needle to and fro more regularly as if she was really at work.

“Mother! dear mother!” said Annie, “come to bed.”

“Oh yes, they ’ll be done soon,” said the widow, “I ’m getting on as fast as ever I can.”

“Awake mother, awake,” cried the little girl, “you ’ve fallen asleep at your work, and ’tis very late.”

“Let me see,” muttered the widow, “four-pence and four-pence are eight-pence, and four-pence more will be two shillings ! ”

“Dear mother,” said the child, “you ’re dreaming, I know you ’re dreaming, for eight-pence and four-pence will only make one shilling. Do come to bed.”

While she said this, she shook her mother’s shoulder and awoke her.

“Where am I?” said the widow, apparently very much astonished at hearing her daughter’s voice. “Am I in the country with Annie?”

“No, dear mother, I’ve come back, please come to bed, there’s a dear mother!”

In a short time the widow recollected herself, and saw that she had slept for a full hour with her work in her hand, and as her fingers were stiff and her eyes heavy, she laid by her task, and hastened as quickly as possible to bed. Annie threw her arms round her mother’s neck, and in a few short minutes they were both fast asleep.

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#### CHAPTER XIII.

“I have brought ten shillings out of the sovereign,” said Mrs. Wright to Mrs. Shepherd, one morning not very long after Annie’s return from the country.

“But you look very ill, Mrs. Wright. I

sadly fear you have been working beyond your strength, and if," said Mrs. Shepherd, "Annie's summer trip has been purchased at the price of your health, it will be a sad thing both for her and you."

The widow did not answer, but looked as though Mrs. Shepherd had indeed said what was the truth.

"But where did you get this half-sovereign?", continued the clergyman's wife, "for if you have earned it all by work, I think you must be far better paid than most persons in the district."

"I have indeed earned the greatest part of it," said the widow, "for I have risen early and sat up late."

"But where did you get the remainder?"

"I sold a shawl," replied the widow, "which I can manage to do without; I could not bear to be long without repaying some part at least of the sovereign you lent me, even though it might be some weeks, or perhaps months, before I can make up the

" "

Mrs. Shepherd, who knew well what wages were paid for needlework, felt that the widow must have indeed worked hard, and on examining her pale face more closely, saw that she was very ill ; she told her therefore that she should not expect the remainder of the sovereign for six months, and having given her some tea and sugar and a small bottle of port wine, which she thought would strengthen her, she sent her away.

Before Mrs. Wright went, Mrs. Shepherd had asked her some questions about Annie, and especially as to whether she seemed grateful for the exertions her mother had made, and was then making, to pay for her country trip. "I suppose," said Mrs. Shepherd, "your daughter helps you a good deal, for by this time she ought to be a very good workwoman, and whatever fault I have had to find with her disposition, her needlework has been always well and neatly done."

It was with deep sorrow, and after much hesitation, that Mrs. Wright had to acknow-

ledge that Annie had not done even a single stitch to help her.

“ But does she know why you are working so hard ? ” asked the clergyman’s wife.

“ I must say she does,” said the little girl’s mother, “ for she asked me, and I was obliged to tell her ; I grieve very much,” said the widow, “ that my child is now so altered from what she used to be ; it is my prayer by day and night that she may be changed ; ” and having said this, the poor woman relieved her heart by a flood of bitter tears.

“ A bad habit is very hard to be got rid of,” said the clergyman’s wife, “ but I will promise you this,” said she, as she turned to Mrs. Wright, “ that I will leave no means untried to overcome this dreadful selfishness that seems to have taken possession of your daughter’s mind ; if it be unchecked it must prove her ruin both in this world and in the next.”



It was true that Mrs. Wright was very ill, much more so indeed than either she herself or Mrs. Shepherd had supposed, and in a day or two after the conversation which had taken place between her and the clergyman's wife, she took to her bed, and her cough became worse and worse.

The widow often sat up and tried to do a little work even in bed, and sorely grieved she felt when she found that, for the present at least, all such attempts must be entirely given up. The physician from the dispensary forbade them altogether, and assured her that nothing but rest and the greatest care could possibly restore her health, or even save her life.

Annie was in the room when he said this ; and as he was going out of the door, and the little girl held it in her hand, he turned round to her and said : " You must take great care of your mother, my child, and must not let her exert herself even in the least ; a very little thing will make her spit

up blood, and if this takes place I cannot answer for her life."

These words of the physician seemed to take great effect upon the child's mind, and she was more particularly horrified at the idea of her mother's spitting blood ; she determined therefore to take all possible care of her parent, and to leave nothing undone that could in any way contribute to her comfort.

And in all this Annie Wright was sincere ; she meant all she said, and for a while she put her good intentions into execution. Every morning Annie was up early ; she cleaned the room ; she made her mother's breakfast ; she washed up the things ; she ran all the errands ; and behaved herself on the whole so well, that she won the good opinion of the physician attending her mother ; she got back into Mrs. Parker's good graces once more ; even Mrs. Shepherd began to hope that the horrid selfishness which had taken possession of her was be-

gimmin to go away, and had Annie continued in this delightful self-denying spirit, she would have saved herself all the sorrow she had afterwards to undergo.

Mrs. Wright improved so rapidly under the physician's remedies, and the great care bestowed upon her by her daughter, that in the course of a fortnight she required no more medicine, and the physician came to see her for the last time.

“I am truly glad,” said he, “that you have had such a rapid recovery; when first I came to see you, you were in a most dangerous state, but thanks to God’s blessing on my medicines, and to the great care bestowed upon you by your little nurse, I hope that all dangerous symptoms have passed away, and that you will recover strength every day.”

Having thus pronounced his opinion on the widow’s health, he patted Annie’s head and told her how well pleased he was with

her for her attention to her mother, and as she opened the door for him, he put his hand in his pocket and produced a shilling, which he gave to the little girl, telling her that it was a little token of his approval of her conduct towards her mother !

Alas ! what misery was caused by this shilling, or rather, by the selfish spirit that it called forth.

When Annie returned up stairs and was within a few steps of her mother's room, crack, crack against the street door was heard the postman's knock. She had seen him a little way off, when she was talking to the Doctor, but had not waited for him, he so seldom rapped at their house, and even when he did his letters were not for her mother or herself.

As however she was actually on the stairs, she ran down to open the door, when the postman thrust a letter into her hand, saying hurriedly, " Miss Anne Wright," and before

she could recover herself, or ask him if it were not a mistake, he was off down the street, three or four doors away.

“Miss Anne Wright!” said the little girl, twisting and turning the letter in her hand; that is my name, but who in the world could want to write to me? Oh! Ellen Smith to be sure,” said she, as she saw “Cambridge” on the post mark—“perhaps she is coming,” and up she bounded once more, until she reached her mother’s room.

The widow was as much surprised at Annie’s receiving a letter as the little girl herself; but it was soon opened and its contents made known.

“Coming up to town! Coming in a fortnight! how delightful,” cried Annie, “how very delightful! what fun!” and in the excitement of such joyful news, the little girl forgot all about her mother’s health.

But although she had forgotten all about her mother’s health, she had not forgotten the shilling that the Doctor had given her a

few moments before. The first time she had gone up stairs after letting him out, she had made up her mind to spend every farthing of it upon her dear mother, in buying some meat, or some little dainty that she could not otherwise have had ; but as quick as thought the arrival of Ellen Smith's letter had changed her mind. In an instant she remembered all the pleasure she had promised herself in going to the Exhibition with her friend ; this shilling would enable her to do it, if she said anything about it, perhaps her mother might ask her to spend it for something they wanted, and therefore she thought the best thing to be done was not to mention it until the day for going to the Exhibition had come.

Having thus hurriedly made up her mind, she never said one word to her mother of the Doctor's gift ; who could have imagined that any girl with a spark of love could have acted thus ?. There, propped up in her chair, just recovering from serious illness,

brought on by working to get the sovereign to pay for her daughter's summer trip, sat the pale and feeble widow. Annie knew well what the work which she held so languidly in her thin transparent fingers was for ; how far a shilling would go towards making up the sum, she also knew right well ; but she let the Doctor's gift lie buried in the bottom of her pocket, and had made up her mind to spend it in one selfish gratification of herself.

“Annie !” said the widow to her daughter, “ I see Mr. Smith can remain in London only for a week, and as you are so fond of Ellen, I should like you to see as much of her as possible, suppose you write to her and tell her she can sleep with you, and Mr. Smith can have the room at the top of the house, I am sure our landlord will be very glad to let it for five shillings at the very outside.”

“Capital ! Capital !” shouted the little girl, “but then, mother, where will you sleep ?”

"Oh, I 'll find room," replied the widow, "Mrs. Parker, I make no doubt, will clear out her closet, which will hold me ; it would not hold a bedstead, but I can make up a bed for myself on the floor."

A thought of what the Doctor had said about the great care which must be taken of her mother flashed across Annie Wright's mind, and she felt that the floor even with a bed on it was not a fit place for Mrs. Wright to sleep on in her present delicate state of health ; had such a proposal been made an hour ago, before Ellen Smith's letter arrived, Annie would have been quite shocked, but now she accepted her mother's proposal without any hesitation, filled with but one thought, that of sleeping with Ellen Smith again.

" You had better get a sheet of paper and prepare to write to Ellen," said the widow, " and send Mrs. Parker to me that I may arrange every thing with her." This was very easily done, Mrs. Parker was so fond

of Mrs. Wright that she would have done anything for her, and after having represented how likely her neighbour was to take fresh cold, she consented to let her have the closet for a week. "But mind," said she, "if you are laid up again, it will be your own fault, and I think the risk is almost too great for you to run."

This being settled, Annie was not long in writing the letter inviting Ellen Smith to stay with her mother, not forgetting to tell her that they were to sleep together, and talk just as they used to do during the holiday in the country.

Annie Wright posted the letter herself, and spent the remainder of the day in a very excited state. She was very happy at the thought of seeing her friend again, and even when she knelt down to pray in the evening, her mind was running on Ellen Smith's arrival;—this was very sad;—she should have driven all such disturbing thoughts from her head while she was at prayer.

perhaps if she had done so she might have been led to listen more attentively to the voice of her conscience, and have escaped the trouble into which she so soon fell.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

BRIGHT as Annie Wright's prospects were of enjoying the Exhibition in company with her friend, the violent return of Mrs. Wright's disease seemed likely to prevent their ever being realized.

The day but one after Annie's letter had been sent off, Mrs. Wright spit up some blood and became very ill. Thinking herself quite strong once more, and that she could never get the sovereign quickly enough to return to her kind friend, Mrs. Shepherd, she had sat up late again, and had gone out to the warehouse with her work, to be paid for what she had done.

This exertion proved too much for her ;

the Doctor's words proved alas too true, and at first Annie felt persuaded that she must die.

A messenger was sent for the physician, who was very much displeased on hearing what Mrs. Wright had done. "There is no use in my coming here," said he, "if my directions are not attended to; and if you refuse to take care of yourself, your life must be very short."

The widow felt that she deserved this rebuke, and therefore bore it silently, and having given one or two directions, the Doctor still to all appearance very much displeased, went away.

All that day Annie had to watch by her mother's bed-side, and as the evening closed in, she felt how awful it would be if her mother were really to die, and very often she stooped down to kiss her white forehead, for she thought that the time might soon come when she could kiss it no more.

The evening had closed in, and there was

just a little glimmering of twilight, when Mrs. Shepherd after having been for a long time silent, said to Annie :

“ Annie dear, bring me a little water ; my mouth is continually parched, how I should like a few grapes to moisten my lips, I feel as if they would refresh me more than anything else.”

Annie thrust her hand into her pocket and was just going to produce her shilling, but a thought of the Exhibition flashed across her mind, and she poured out a cup of water and brought it to her mother.

She felt half ashamed of herself as she did this, for the day before she had stopped opposite a fruit shop and seen a basket of grapes, marked at two shillings the pound. She knew that her shilling could have bought half-a-pound ; she knew that in one moment she could have fetched them ; and feeling all this, she turned away her head, not to see her mother drinking cold water.

The widow took a few sips and then gave

the cup back again to her child. "I cannot drink any more of it," said she, it seems so cold, besides it does not satisfy my thirst, I cannot hold it long enough in my mouth; if I could only have a few grapes, I feel as though their acid would quench my thirst."

Once more Annie thrust her hand into her pocket, she even laid hold of the shilling and thought what a sweet surprise it would be if she just ran out of the room for a moment and came back with a delicious bunch, which she had observed in the fruiterer's basket, and which looked so tempting that it had made her own mouth water only the day before; but alas! once again the selfish spirit rose within her and prevailed, and the thought of Ellen Smith and the Exhibition proved too strong even for her love for her mother.

"If you like acid, mother," said Annie, "I'll run in to Mrs. Parker and get her vinegar bottle, and I can put a few drops in the water, perhaps that will prevent your

being so thirsty again ; ” and as the little girl said this, she felt her cheeks grow as hot as fire, and the shilling in her pocket seemed as heavy as lead.

“ I don’t feel, my child, as if I could take the vinegar, and ” continued the widow, “ I can bear being thirsty ; I saw some delicious grapes yesterday in a shop quite near this, and perhaps that made me long too much for them. They were two shillings a pound, Annie, that is very cheap for this season of the year ; perhaps it was because they were so cheap that I thought of them at all, but never mind, dear, I am quite satisfied with water. However, I really think that if I had a shilling this moment I would send you to buy me a few.”

Annie felt something drawing her hand almost irresistibly towards the pocket that held the shilling, but with a violent effort she kept it back. “ Buy the grapes. Buy them,” whispered something in her ear. “ Oh buy them,” whispered a soft voice—

then she heard a deep solemn sound, and she thought some one said "It is your duty to buy the grapes"—then it was as though a hundred people cried out loud, "Buy them—Buy them"—and these voices, which came from Annie's conscience, might have prevailed, had not some one appeared to whisper—"Ellen Smith!" "the Exhibition!" these words laid hold of Annie's selfish spirit, and with another violent effort she said within herself, "I 'll go, yes, I 'm determined I 'll go with Ellen—I 'll keep my shilling—Mother does not know I have it, so she is no worse off." The tempter had triumphed—and when Annie looked at her mother's pale face, she saw that she had fallen asleep, and her dry, parched lips, seemed quite stiff and hard.

Again Mrs. Wright rallied, and once more the kind Doctor took his leave, having given directions that his patient should have every thing nourishing, and as he knew how poor the widow was, he gave her half-a-crown to

provide herself with some beef-tea. This the invalid seemed to enjoy very much, but the half-crown was soon spent, and now Annie had an opportunity of retracing her steps, and laying out her hoarded shilling for her kind mother.

The widow had a cup of this beef-tea each day at one o'clock, besides a little in the morning, and some at night. Annie knew that the half-crown was spent; it was now twelve o'clock, and at one her mother would have to go without the nourishment she so much required. The little girl was anything but comfortable; three or four times she peeped into the saucepan in which she had hitherto made the beef-tea; then she walked away, and sat down to work for a time, but drawn by some apparently irresistible power she returned to the saucepan again and again; at length she put it under her apron and carried it to the cupboard, where she hid it behind some other things. But this did not give her much relief. No sooner

was the saucepan fairly out of sight, than the clock began to attract her attention—it was half-past twelve. But there was nothing very wonderful in that; she had often looked at the clock, and seen the hands pointing to that hour without feeling anything strange, but now she could not keep her eyes from this clock, and as the hand moved on she felt her throat very full and dry, and there came over her a most unaccountable dislike to looking at her mother, or hearing her speak. Once more also did the shilling seem like a lump of lead in her pocket, and as the minute hand of the clock advanced, the shilling seemed to grow heavier and heavier.

Formerly Annie would have gone and knelt down, and asked God to provide for her mother's wants, but now she felt that she could not do this while she had the shilling in her pocket.

At last, the clock struck! Annie, who had sat in a very uncomfortable state, with her eyes fixed upon it for a few minutes be-

fore, gave a sudden jump. A struggle had indeed been going on within her, and it was now ended ; once again she was defeated ; her better nature was overcome, and selfishness prevailed over love for her sick parent !

Mrs. Wright, as we need scarcely say, missed her beef-tea very much, but she never complained. Annie set before her a little dry bread and some ordinary tea, and on this they dined, nor did the plainness of the fare in any way diminish the widow's gratitude for her food ; she knew that a crust of bread was as much God's gift as the finest dinner that could be laid on any table.

But we cannot tell all the opportunities Annie had of spending her shilling for her mother ; all the strugglings she had with her own conscience ; all the unhappiness she felt ; one thing however is certain, that if all the wretchedness she endured could be put side by side with the little pleasure she had with Ellen Smith at the Exhibition, it would be plainly seen that the sin of selfish-

ness had cheated her, and taken from her much more than it had given.

Leaving our reader to imagine all this, let us now come to the day of Mr. Smith's arrival to town, bringing with him his daughter Ellen. Annie Wright was at the railway station to meet them, and while waiting for the train could not but remember how when last she was there, that horrid fat farmer had been with her, and how he had made such fun of her for her tears, those foolish tears which she shed when returning to a kind and loving mother. These disagreeable thoughts did not however remain long; a whistle was heard, then a rumbling noise, and the ringing of a bell, and in rolled the train. In a few minutes Annie and Ellen were hand in hand on the platform, while Mr. Smith was looking for their luggage. Nor was it long before they reached the house where Mrs. Wright lived, who gave her visitors a hearty welcome. As to the little girls, they were so full of each other,

that they seemed unable to attend to anything ; Mr. Smith however immediately set to work, and undoing a large hamper that he had brought with him, produced before Mrs. Wright's wondering eyes a pair of fowls, some home-made bread, a quantity of fresh butter, and eggs in such numbers, that Mrs. Wright thought they never would end.

“ Now then,” said the kind hearted man, “ these roasted fowls are for dinner, and these eggs for supper, and Mrs. Smith is to send up another hamper about the end of the week, so we shall none of us starve.”

Truly delighted was the widow at the sight of all these good things; such plenty she had not for a long time seen, and if the truth were known, her mouth did rather water at the sight of the roast fowls, and the abundance of good rich butter ; what made her so pleased however, was not so much the thought of eating such dainties herself, as the being spared the pain of telling Mr. Smith that all she could offer Ellen and him was a lodging,

for that she was really unable to provide him with such other things as he might require.

Dear kind Mr. Smith however had found out how poor Annie's mother was, and with the greatest consideration had come provided with abundance, not only for Ellen and himself, but for Mrs. Wright and Annie also.

Scarcely had they done dinner when Harriet, Mrs. Shepherd's servant, arrived to see her father and sister, and when her first greeting was over she turned to Annie Wright, and said: "Oh dear, I was near forgetting; Annie, you are to go over to Mrs. Shepherd, as she wants to speak to you."

"Oh, to-morrow will do," said the little girl, "How can I leave Ellen to-night!"

"No, to-morrow will not do, I'm sure," said Harriet Smith, "for Mistress said particularly that you were to go over to her as soon as I had given you the message."

"You had better go," said Mr. Smith.

"I dare say she wont keep you long," said Ellen.

"Yes dear," chimed in the widow, "it would be very wrong to keep Mrs. Shepherd waiting, put on your bonnet and go at once."

It was impossible for Annie Wright to hold out any longer against the voices of the whole party, so she tied on her bonnet, flung her shawl in a very pettish way across her shoulders, and ran off as fast as she could to Mrs. Shepherd's house.

"Sit down until you are cool," said that lady in her usual quiet way, and she pointed out a chair near the door.

Annie sat down, and after she had been there a few minutes, Mrs. Shepherd said: "What have you done with the shilling that Dr. Connolly gave you the other day?"

If a thunderbolt had fallen down at Annie's feet, she could not have been more astonished than she was at this question of Mrs. Shepherd's. Who had told her that Dr. Connolly had given her this shilling? she did not believe that a creature in the world knew anything about it, except the Doctor and herself.

The little girl grew pale and red by turns, at last she said, what was indeed the truth, "I've saved it up, Ma'am, to go to the Exhibition with Mr. Smith."

"But I have been told that your Mother has been as bad as it is possible for any one to be, surely you must have known of many things that she required."

Now came rushing into Annie's mind the remembrance of her Mother's great wish for a few grapes, and also that terrible hour from twelve to one, when she knew that there was not a drop of beef tea for her mother's dinner, and that the last and only shilling in the house was hoarded up in her pocket for seeing a sight, which she had already seen two or three times before.

The shame of this completely overwhelmed her, and she dared not tell the clergyman's wife all that had passed; she had soon to learn that one sin brings in another, for she said, what she knew well was a positive lie, "I am sure, Ma'am, my mother did not want

for anything, the Doctor was so kind, he sent her everything she wanted." And here-upon Annie's face grew redder than before ; so red that Mrs. Shepherd very plainly saw she was telling her a deliberate lie.

"I am ashamed of you Annie," said she, "it was only this very morning that Mrs. Parker was here, and she told me all about your mother's having to go without much that she required, especially some beef tea ordered by Dr. Connolly, and you had that shilling in your pocket all the time. It happens," continued Mrs. Shepherd, "that the Doctor came here a day or two ago, and talking of you, said that he had given you a shilling because he had been pleased with you ; I am sorry that it has proved the occasion of so much sin."

Annie cried a great deal, and made a great many excuses, all of which were of no avail with Mrs. Shepherd, who was far too wise a woman to listen to such folly ; and the end of the matter was, that Mrs. Shepherd told

Annie it was her duty to give that shilling to her mother, and to forego the pleasure of attending the Exhibition with Mr. Smith and Ellen. "You should have given it to your mother long ago," said Mrs. Shepherd, "it is better late than never," and then Mrs. Shepherd told the little girl why her mother had the first claim upon her; "and although," said she, "the shilling is your own, for the Doctor gave it to you, still in God's sight you, under your circumstances, have no right to spend it on yourself."

As Mrs. Shepherd did not wish to compel Annie to give the shilling to her mother, but desired rather to induce her to give it of her own free will, for thus only could the sacrifice be acceptable to God, she refrained from saying any more, but dismissed her, after having first knelt down and prayed with her.

"Well Annie! what did Mrs. Shepherd want?" said Mrs. Wright, as the little girl came in rather slowly into the room.

"Oh, she replied, nothing particular, she

wanted me to do some work, but says next week will be time enough."

Here was the selfish child led by her selfishness into a second falsehood ; she fancied she could never bear the shame of her mother's knowing that she had had a shilling during the time of her illness and that she had kept it to herself. Nor could she bear Mr. Smith and Ellen to know that Mrs. Shepherd did not wish her to accompany them to the Exhibition, on which she had so long set her heart.

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#### CHAPTER XV.

THE following morning Mrs. Shepherd sent her servant Harriet over to Mrs. Wright's, to find out if her admonition had the desired effect on Annie Wright, or if she still intended to go to the Exhibition.

Harriet had directions to ask her father to call in on Mrs. Shepherd before they started, if Annie Wright was to be of the party.

On going into Mrs. Wright's room she soon found that Annie's determination had not been in the least changed by what Mrs. Shepherd had said to her ; on the other hand, she was at that very moment engaged in telling Ellen which things she intended to take her to first.

Harriet, finding matters in this condition, called her father aside and told him of Mrs. Shepherd's wish ; whereupon he immediately put on his hat and accompanied her, taking Ellen with him.

Annie Wright did not know where they were going to, and as Mr. Smith declared that he would be back in a few minutes, she did not seem to think much more about it.

When they arrived at the clergyman's house, they were informed by Mrs. Shepherd of all that had passed about the shilling, and this lady dwelt very strongly upon the necessity of giving the selfish child a lesson such as she was not likely to forget.

Mr. Smith quite agreed that this ought to

be done, and declared that Annie should not accompany him and his daughter to the Exhibition.

Mrs. Shepherd however did not approve of this determination ; moreover, if she had pleased, she could herself have directed Annie to stay at home ; she rather wished her to spend her shilling as she herself so selfishly desired, and to feel that sin brings its own discomfort and disappointment with it.

Ellen, who had naturally very good sense, and what is even better than good sense, a love of God, saw that what Mrs. Shepherd proposed was perfectly right ; besides which, she was so horrified at the thought of what Annie had done, that she could not bear to have her to keep her company in the Exhibition, when every moment she must feel that the selfish child had deprived her mother of comforts and even necessities, to be able to pay for admission.

It was determined, then, that Mr. Smith and Ellen were to allow Annie to accompany

them, but that they were to take no notice of her ; or at least to treat her with that coolness which her conduct so richly deserved.

To the Exhibition then they all went at eleven o'clock, and highly delighted were both Mr. Smith and Ellen with its beautiful appearance. As far as the eye could reach, the building was glistening in the sun ; and hundreds of persons were wending their way towards it from every part.

Mr. Smith paid two shillings, one for him self and one for Ellen, and Annie Wright drew forth from a small purse, her shilling ; the only one in it, the one that had cost her more sorrow than she had ever experienced in her life before.

Mr. Smith watched her, and so did Ellen, they both felt curious to see the coin, and they looked upon it with a feeling of disgust as it lay for a moment on the little counter ; as to Annie Wright, she felt at first deeply ashamed, for she remembered the grapes and the beef tea ; but this feeling was, alas ! very

passing, it lasted only for a moment, her next thought was one of pleasure that the shilling was gone; it seemed as though a heavy weight had been taken out of her pocket; she vainly thought that all disagreeable feelings must depart with the shilling itself.

But even this reflection was very short lived, for the party were now fairly inside the building, and Mr. Smith was very anxious to see all he could. As to Annie Wright, she soon began to find a difference in the way Mr. Smith and Ellen spoke to her. She saw moreover that she was not to be the great person of the party as she had so delightfully anticipated; Mr. Smith did not allow her to lead him hither and thither as she had expected, and Ellen and he seemed to think her an encumbrance rather than anything else.

All this mortified her exceedingly, and now and then suspicions used to cross her mind that Mr. Smith and Ellen must have heard something about the shilling. She

knew that there must be some cause for the change in his conduct towards her ; and this suspicion soon became certainty, when Mr. Smith came to the place where the great diamond was, and pointing it out to Ellen said : “ Ellen, my child ! a shilling given to God will be thought more of in the last great day, than that large diamond, worth, as people say, hundreds of thousands of guineas.”

The secret of Mr. Smith’s and Ellen’s conduct was now out, there was no doubt but that Mr. Smith had looked at Annie as he made this speech, and thus did she begin to reap some of the wretchedness which she had sown for herself by her mis-spending the Doctor’s shilling.

But more misery was at hand.

Scarcely had Mr. Smith made this speech about the diamond and the shilling, when a stream of people came pouring down upon them from the neighbouring entrance, and in the crowd and rush, Annie Wright was separated from her companions.

When the crowd had somewhat scattered, she tried to find them, but in vain ; she went into all the neighbouring compartments, she loitered for a long time by the crystal fountain, she strained her eyes in every direction, but all in vain, neither Mr. Smith nor Ellen were anywhere to be seen ; at last, after a search of two hours, the little girl had to sit down, hungry, tired and wretched, although there were thousands of beautiful objects around.

The reader can well imagine what must have been her feelings as she sat alone upon one of the long seats, with no one to look at her, no one to speak to her, no one to offer her a morsel to eat and drink ; but all this would have troubled Annie but little, if she had that greatest of all blessings, a clear conscience. But what was the case ? ; every moment she was thinking of the shilling which she had so cruelly hoarded ; and was it for this she had committed so much sin ? just to be inside the Great Exhibition, first of all to be neglected by Mr. Smith and Ellen,

and then to sit upon a bench in weariness and loneliness the live long day? "How much happier," thought she, "should I be at home with my mother; how much pleasanter would it have been if she had had my shilling for the grapes!" but it was too late now, what was done could not be undone, and she had only to bear her wretchedness as best she could.

At length, after hours had passed away, she stationed herself on the platform near the door by which they had entered, for she felt sure Mr. Smith and Ellen would pass out that way; and there she staid with her eyes fixed upon the door, watching every one that went out, until the signal was given that every one was to leave.

As to Mr. Smith, when he became separated from Annie Wright, he also sought for her in every direction, but having failed in his attempts to find her, he gave up the search, comforting himself with the thought, that the little girl was not likely to be lost as

she had been there two or three times before.

As to Annie Wright she kept on watching, but all in vain ; she could not discern the features of Mr. Smith or Ellen in any of the crowd.

At last almost every one seemed to have gone ; and a policeman seeing her sitting still upon the platform told her to go home. What else was there for her to do ? It was quite plain that Mr. Smith and Ellen must have gone, and faint and wearied she prepared to walk three long miles to her own house.

This she accomplished with the greatest difficulty ; and when at length she reached her home, she found her mother's eyes red with weeping, and Mr. Smith and Ellen very silent, and looking very sad.

At first Annie Wright thought that they must have all supposed her lost, and thus she accounted for her mother's eyes being red, and for Mr. Smith's and Ellen's apparent sadness. But she was quickly unde-  
d, for not one of the party welcomed

her back, or asked any question as to what had happened since she parted from her friends at the Exhibition.

It was evident that something was wrong, and her conscience whispered to her that it must be connected with the shilling about which Mrs. Shepherd had said so much—and this was speedily confirmed by Mrs. Wright's directing the little girl to go immediately to that lady's house.

Of all places in the world this was the very last in which Annie Wright desired just now to find herself; but no excuse would be taken, and Mr. Smith himself said that he would accompany her thither.

It was in vain that Annie remonstrated against this, and even professed herself ready to set out immediately alone. Mr. Smith *would* go, and in a few minutes they both found themselves at Mrs. Shepherd's. Mr. Smith went in with Annie, and what were the little girl's feelings of shame when Mrs. Shepherd told him all the circumstances about the

selfish child having kept possession of the shilling while her mother was in need of even the common necessaries of life. "Yes," said Mrs. Shepherd, "and Mrs. Wright's illness has, I fear, been altogether brought on by overworking, by sitting up late at night and rising early in the morning, and by denying herself such little comforts as her earnings might have procured, in order to pay off a sovereign I lent her, to enable this selfish child to have a summer excursion to your house."

Mr. Smith had been horrified beyond measure at having heard of Annie's selfish conduct about the shilling, but he now felt quite overwhelmed at the thought of her having behaved thus to so kind a mother; when therefore the clergyman's wife requested him to return to Mrs. Wright, and inform her that Annie was not to return home at all that evening, he took his leave without either speaking to, or looking at the wicked child.

As to Annie, she trembled all over ! What could Mrs. Shepherd mean by keeping her ? Was she going to whip her ? or to shut her up in the coal cellar ? A thousand horrible visions passed across her mind, and she very nearly dropped from her seat with fright !

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## CHAPTER XVI.

WHEN the street door had shut, Mrs. Shepherd bade Annie Wright draw her chair near the table, and then she represented to her the great wickedness of her conduct towards her mother. She informed her of all that mother had gone through to pay for the country trip ; she reminded her of how little pleasure had been, after all, derived from the expenditure of the shilling upon herself, and as all these things came home to the child's mind, she sobbed aloud. "But worse than all," said the clergyman's wife, "you have offended the Great God,

who requires every one to honour his father and his mother, and he has no doubt punished you by the wretchedness you felt in the Exhibition to-day, and by disappointing you of the pleasure you hoped to enjoy from such a wicked mis-spending of the last shilling you or your mother possessed in the world."

When Mrs. Shepherd had finished speaking on this subject, she rang the bell and told Harriet to take Annie Wright up stairs, as she was not to go home that night.

On hearing this the little girl screamed out, and begged and prayed to be allowed to go home.

"Certainly not," said Mrs. Shepherd, "when we misuse our blessings they are often taken from us, and it is well that you should feel what it is to be separated from a parent for whom you have shewn so little love."

But no remonstrances seemed to avail, and at length Harriet had to march her up the stairs by main force.

There was a very small bed in the attic into which Annie was put, a table with some dry bread and a cup full of cold milk and water, and here she was to sleep by herself, all that she had to pass away the time being a bible which also lay upon the table, but which the little girl was in no very proper frame of mind to read.

It was a long time before she could touch her food, it was true, she felt very hungry ; she had had nothing since the morning, and she had walked very far, but there was something in her throat which seemed like a hard lump, and threatened every moment to choke her. Hunger however, forced her to eat and drink, and from very weariness she fell asleep, alas ! without imploring forgiveness for her selfishness, or being softened the least in heart.

But weariness, though it made her sleep, could not send her pleasant dreams, and all sorts of horrid visions passed across her mind. At one moment her mother had died from

starvation, then the Exhibition came tumbling down and she was killed by a great beam falling on her head ; again the scene would change, and she fancied that Mr. Smith and Ellen were pointing their fingers at her, and shouting out “ selfish child ! ” while a great crowd looked on, for the last shilling had somehow become fixed tightly to her forehead, and nothing could by any possibility get it off ; but the most terrifying vision of all was one in which she saw herself before a great throne, and heard the judge condemn her, and saw some one shew him the shilling she had mis-spent, and tell him every circumstance about it.

At last the morning came, and Annie expected to be let return to her mother ; but Mrs. Shepherd on conversing with her found that her heart was not as yet suitably impressed with a consciousness of her sin ; she gave her therefore directions to go to school, but to return direct, and not to go near her mother’s house. As Mrs. Wright’s lodging

was within about twenty yards of where Annie's school was, this was perhaps the greatest punishment that could have been inflicted on her, but it was necessary ; her selfishness had taken such deep hold of her heart that she needed to learn that if indulged it must, like all other sin, bring forth much sad and bitter fruit.

When twelve o'clock struck and all the other girls went home to dinner, Annie Wright had to return to her room at Mrs. Shepherd's ; and at four when the school was broken up for the day, and happiness was beaming in the countenance of every little girl, this unhappy child, with many a wistful look at the street where her mother lived, slowly turned her steps towards her solitary chamber once again.

The servant that let Annie Wright in did not speak to her, and on reaching her room she found a little milk and water and some bread laid for her tea ; and this she partook of in bitterness of heart. She was now be-

ginning to feel her exceeding sinfulness, and sorely did she miss the presence of that kind mother whom (though she had acted with selfishness towards her) she so truly loved. And this feeling, we are happy to say, continued to deepen within her heart, for God's Holy Spirit was working upon her, until at length she knelt down by her bed, and with many tears implored forgiveness for her sin. She was thus engaged when she heard a footstep on the stairs, and presently Mr. Shepherd himself appeared. He had come to see whether she was really impressed with a proper sense of her sin, for he had heard her sobs from the room below.

Truly delighted was this good man to hear Annie's professions of deep repentance, and that which pleased him most was, that she seemed more distressed at her sin against God than at any thing else. It reminded him of what the Psalmist said in Ps. li, when he was in such deep affliction for his iniquity, "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned,

and done this evil in thy sight ;” and to make the impression of the present moment deeper on her mind, he sat down and shewed her at large how grievous her offence must have been in the sight of God. But that which Mr. Shepherd dwelt on most of all, was the unselfish character of Jesus Christ, who left the bosom of His father, and all the glories of heaven, for the sole purpose of redeeming without money and without price, poor ruined men. He shewed her how all through His life, the Redeemer had never thought of “self,” and that to enter the kingdom of heaven men must have characters like His.

The little girl was deeply moved at all this, and retired to rest with an humble hope of forgiveness in her Saviour ; nor are we to suppose that she forgot her dear mother—far from it. But she hoped to be allowed to return home the following day, when she determined to make amends as far as it was possible for the past.

Though Annie Wright's sin was, we may hope, forgiven, still some more of its consequences had yet to be endured, and sadly disappointed was she to hear on the following morning that several days must yet elapse before she could see her mother. At first this seemed very hard, but both Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, with Mrs. Wright herself, determined that this was best, as it was likely to make a more permanent impression on Annie's mind.

The best sign, however, that she gave of the sincerity of her repentance, was the meekness with which she endured this privation ; she acknowledged that it was just, and comforted herself with thoughts of how much she would do to make her mother comfortable, how entirely she would deny herself for that dear mother's sake. And to be enabled to do this, she made it a frequent subject of prayer, for Mr. Shepherd, who saw her in his study every day, did not fail to impress upon her her own insufficiency to

amend her life, or combat successfully with sin.

Slowly did the days roll on during the week that Annie Wright had to remain, but at last the morning came when she was to return to her home. She felt some shame, for Mr. and Mrs. Parker knew all about the shilling, and she did not know but that Mr. Smith and Ellen might still be in the house ; but the hope of seeing her mother overcame every other feeling, and her heart leaped within her when the clock struck the hour for the breaking up of school.

Annie never ran so fast in her life as she did over the short distance that separated the school from her mother's house ; she was at home almost in a moment, and threw herself once again into the arms of her mother. Annie wept, and her mother wept, and then Mrs. Parker seemed to catch the infection, for she wept also, and the old man, who was still in his bed, when he heard all this weeping, after two or three vain attempts to get

up so as to find out what it was, began to weep himself.

But this did not last long; the occasion was one like that of the return of the Prodigal, and presently smiles took the place of tears. The evening was spent in happiness by the fire-side, while Mrs. Wright told her daughter how much she had thought of her, how dearly she still loved her, and Annie poured out all her feelings of sorrow for what had passed, and declared her intention, with God's blessing, to act differently for the future.

As to Ellen Smith and her father, they had returned to Cambridge a day or two before, and Annie scarcely ventured to ask much about them—she heard, however, that Ellen had seen many of the London sights, and had gone home delighted with them all. Annie held down her head, and the tears came in her eyes, as she thought that the only damper to their pleasure trip had been her bad conduct, which they both had felt very much.

## CHAPTER XVII.

AND now that our story is drawing to a close, let us here enquire what became of little Mary, the gardener's daughter, and Emily Bunny, her friend. About two months after the events which we have just related, a letter was received by Mr. Shepherd from dear old Mr. Young, enclosing a post-office order for a small sum of money. It said that little Mary very soon after Emily Bunny's return to London with Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd, had been taken ill, and that it was much feared she could not long survive. Mr. Young said in his letter that the little girl had so often expressed a wish to see her little playfellow, Emily Bunny, and her father seemed so anxious to gratify the desire, that he now wrote to beg she might be sent, and that speedily, the post-office order being intended to defray the expence of her journey.

Mr. Shepherd put the letter in his pocket and proceeded immediately to Emily's mother.

Mrs. Bunny was very much shocked to hear the sad news, for though Mary had written one little letter to her daughter Emily, she had said nothing of her illness ; besides which, the kind woman had been saving up a few shillings to enable her to have little Mary up with her in the Spring. The clergyman went to the school and told Emily the sad news of her little playfellow's dangerous illness, adding at the same time, " And you are to go by the train this afternoon to see her, as Mr. Young wishes you to go at once."

" But who will help you, mother, to make up your room, and to carry home your clothes ? " said the dutiful child, turning to her parent, who had accompanied Mr. Shepherd to the school.

" Oh never mind about that," said Mrs. Bunny, " I can get up a little earlier, and will manage pretty well for a while by myself ; and you would not, I know, on any account miss seeing dear little Mary, who is so extremely ill."

But Emily's perplexity was to be removed in another way, and that from a quarter quite unexpected. "Please Ma'am," said a little girl, stepping up to the mistress, "if Emily goes, I 'll get up a little earlier and finish off mother's room, and then I can go in time to help Mrs. Bunny with hers."

This little girl was Annie Wright, who had not forgotten how she had spent her "last shilling," and who was now anxious entirely to forget herself, and to do what she could for others.

Mr. Shepherd was truly pleased, and it was agreed that during Emily's absence, Annie should, with her mother's consent, assist Mrs. Bunny as much as she could.

Emily Bunny's heart was sad as the train moved off for the place where she had enjoyed such happy hours with her little friend. As long as it was light she looked out upon the country, which was now very different from what it had appeared when she had passed through it before ; the leaves were

almost all gone, and the trees looked like great skeletons standing up in the grey twilight of the chilly evening. But when the last trace of light had passed away, then all the reality of little Mary's illness burst upon her mind, and she felt that her friend must be dying, or they would never have sent for her.

Mrs. Young's housekeeper met the little girl at the station, and accompanied her to the little hamlet, where she had spent such happy days ; and Emily was all eagerness to see her friend. She was not, however, taken to her house, but to Mr. Young's, who had already shewn his good nature by paying for her coming down.

There Emily found every one very sad ; they all loved the gardener's daughter, she was so good ; and now that it was certain, not only that she could not recover, but that her end was near, they felt it very much.

That night she was sleeping very soundly, owing to some medicine which the Doctor

had prescribed to stop her pain and cough, and Emily had to go to bed without seeing her. And when in bed, she heard the waves again ; the same sweet waves which she had listened to with such wonder when she was at the sea for the first time, the same which Mary loved so much, and which used to beat in upon the rock, in the cave where they had prayed and sung.

For a long long time did she lie awake, and all that had passed during her former visit to this place came crowding in upon her mind ; she now knew that Mary must die, Mr. Young had told her so on her arrival, and soon she thought that the waves would have the cavern to themselves, for "I am sure," said Emily, "no one else ever goes to pray there, and Mary will be in heaven!"

On the following day immediately after breakfast Mr. Young took Emily to the gardener's cottage. Dick, who had been so full of fun, had come to say that his sister was

now awake, and waiting to see her little friend ; but Emily scarcely knew that was the same Dick that had driven the luggage cart, his eyes were so red, and he seemed altogether so sadly changed.

But he was not half so changed as his sister Mary. There she lay upon her little bed, so thin that any one could have almost seen through and through her transparent hands, her cheeks were bright and red, and her eye was almost dazzling, it was so bright; while her beautiful brown curls hung down upon the pillow.

Emily was almost startled when she saw her ; she had always heard that people when they were dying were pale, and that their eyes were closed, and she had expected to see something very dreadful. But Mary was much more beautiful than she had ever been, and yet there was something about her look that was very strange.

Mary's father and mother were in the

room, but her chief attendant seemed to be her brother Dick, who had never laughed even once since his sister's illness took so dangerous a turn, and who was in truth her constant nurse. He now put his arm gently under her head, and kissed her forehead as he raised her, propped her up with her pillows, and then with his great rough hand he smoothed her hair, but Dick's touch was so gentle, that his sister scarcely felt him as he was doing it. And there, near his sister, he would have sat the live long day, had she not begged every one to go away for awhile, as she liked to have Emily for a little by herself.

When Mr. Young and Mary's parents, with Dick, had gone away into the next room, the little girl took Emily's hand in both of hers, and Emily almost started back, for they were as hot as any fire.

"It is here," said Mary, "it is here, under my pillow, Dick never touches it when

he makes my bed, but he is to have it when I die—then he will sing out of it; he will go to the cave, and he says he will often pray there when I am gone. Let us sing our sweet hymn," said Mary, and she made an effort to draw from under her pillow the book which Emily had given her.

But she had no strength for this, and the exertion proved too much for her, for she fell back helplessly upon the bed.

For a while her eyes were closed; and when they opened again, she feebly drew Emily near her, and asked her to lay her head down upon the pillow; "lay it quite close to mine," she said, "it is so pleasant to whisper, for I cannot talk out loud."

Emily did as she was asked, and Mary gently pressed her hand. Neither said anything, for they were both listening to the waves, which were murmuring sweetly as the tide was coming in. Perhaps it was because they had listened to them so often together

in the cave ; but so it was, they listened to them now, and did not speak. A quarter of an hour thus passed away, and then the sick child seemed suddenly to revive. " Oh yes," said she, " they are coming—I hear the wheels—they are rolling so softly—they are talking—they are singing—Oh yes, they are looking for me in the cave, but they will know I am here, they will come here for me, there are hundreds of them upon the water, they are sailing along like ships with white sails. Look, Emily, look," and as if she had recovered all her strength, she sat up and stretched out her head and hands in the direction of the murmuring waters.

But her last words were uttered so loudly that her father and mother returned into the room, and very shocked they were to see the change that had come over their child.

She was indeed dying, and Dick was soon to lose the sister he had nursed so tenderly and loved so well.

Mary lived until five o'clock that day, and just as the twilight was deepening into night, she passed away.

As to Emily, she remained until the funeral was over, and then returned to London.

She found that Annie Wright had indeed fulfilled her engagement, and done for Mrs. Bunny even more than she had promised. It was a trial to Annie to get up so early. It was a trial to have no time for play, but she remembered the last shilling, and how she had prayed that henceforth she might not live entirely to herself.

As to Emily Bunny, she often looks up above the tall dark houses of London to the blue sky, and thinks of how sweetly Mary died; over and over again has she told the whole story to Annie Wright, who loves to hear of good things, and whose greatest treat is to be allowed to read with Emily out of the prayer book which Mary had given her.

As to Dick, he is the most thoughtful lad in the hamlet where he lives, he has planted his sister's grave with many a beautiful flower, and many a time sits with his bible in his hand on Mary's seat in the cave, while his fine bass voice, singing her favourite hymns, is in full, rich, deep harmony with the waves which break with such sweet music at his feet !

THE END.

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